

Iraq to allow Red Cross role in food

AMMAN (J.T.) — An official of the Iraqi Red Crescent Society said Saturday Baghdad was prepared to allow the Geneva-based Red Cross to supervise distribution of food and medicine to foreigners trapped in Iraq. "The Iraqi Red Crescent is ready to coordinate with the League of Red Cross and Red Crescent societies to guarantee giving food and medicine to foreign nationals in Iraq," Amed Abdul Hameed told the Jordan news agency, Petra. Abdul Hameed is head of the Iraqi Red Crescent's international affairs department. He said a precedent was set last month when the Indian Red Cross Society and the Iraqi Red Crescent Society oversaw distribution of food and medicine shipped to needy Indians in Iraq and Kuwait. "This is a successful example of how we could jointly work," Abdul Hameed told Petra after attending a conference in Amman.

Ozal flies to Saudi Arabia

ANKARA (R) — Turkish President Turgut Ozal flew to Saudi Arabia Saturday for Gulf crisis talks, the semi-official Anatolian news agency said. Ozal will also visit the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Egypt and Syria during a five-day tour of Arab states opposed to Iraq. "The main purpose of my trip is to improve bilateral relations with these countries," Ozal told reporters before his departure. The Turkish leader will relay his country's views on the Gulf crisis, his spokesman, Kaya Topeli said Friday. Turkey, the only NATO member country bordering Iraq, has an estimated 100,000 troops along its border with Iraq and parliament has empowered the government to send forces to the Gulf if necessary. Turkey has named former Finance Minister Ahmet Kucuk as its new foreign minister. Prime Minister Yildirim Akbulut said Akbulut, 50 and a mechanical engineer by training, would succeed Ali Baser. Baser, a former law professor, resigned earlier Friday because of an apparent rift with Ozal over his virtual exclusion from the handling of Gulf policy.

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King, Saddam exchange messages

Aziz: Gulf crisis in phase of reassessment and reconsideration

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — His Majesty King Hussein Saturday received a message from Iraqi President Saddam Hussein on the latest developments in the Gulf crisis. The Iraqi foreign minister, Tariq Aziz, who delivered the message, said he was taking back a reply message from the King to President Saddam.

In an arrival statement, Aziz said the Gulf crisis had entered a new phase of "reconsideration and reassessment" of positions but that Iraq, while seeking a peaceful solution to the crisis, should bear in mind the "aggressive intentions" of the United States and Israel.

The Jordan News Agency, Petra, which reported the King's meeting with Aziz, did not give details. But Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Marwan Al Qasbi said Aziz's visit was part of continued consultations between Jordan and Iraq over the Gulf crisis.

The King's talks with Aziz also dealt with talks between Iraqi and European leaders and President Saddam's message to the King contained the Iraqi views on these talks, Qasbi told reporters at the airport after seeing off Aziz.

Jordan remained optimistic and will continue its effort for a peaceful settlement of the Gulf crisis, Qasbi said.

In his arrival statement, Aziz said: "The present phase is one of reconsideration and reassessment of all plans and trends. But we must have no illusions regarding the aggressive intentions of the United States, the Zionist entity, and other Western powers."

"International awareness regarding the dangers facing these allies in the Gulf has prompted this reconsideration. We welcome this development and all good intentions because the goal of the Arab Nation and Iraq is peace," he said.

"We in Iraq are still looking for a comprehensive and just peace that safeguards the rights of

Arabs and eliminates the core of the Middle East crisis," he said. "The unjust sanctions that have been taken against Iraq have their implications," he said.

But if those powers who were behind those sanctions wanted those sanctions and the embargo to squeeze Iraq and to (undermine) the decision, the resolution of the Iraqi people for resistance, they are wrong," he said. "The Iraqi people is one of the most ancient of nations and peoples in the world. It has survived for 5,000 years it has survived wars and a lot of hard situations and it has survived and we will survive. (We are not going to kneel under the pressure of the big powers.)"

Aziz's visit to Jordan comes after a senior adviser to Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev said after talks in Baghdad last week that he was optimistic about chances of a peaceful settlement.

The Soviet envoy, Yevgeny Primakov, held talks with Aziz and President Saddam.

He met earlier with King Hussein.



His Majesty King Hussein Saturday receives Iraqi Foreign Minister Tariq Aziz (photo by Youssef Al 'Allan)

The Aziz visit also followed a call by King Hassan of Morocco for Iraq to withdraw from Kuwait if the international community agreed to deal with the Arab-Israeli conflict at the same time. "Leave by the main door with honour since you have already linked the Israeli-Arab question with the Gulf crisis," King Hassan told the Moroccan parliament Friday.

Jordan: Resolution on massacre a good start

Aziz says U.N. moves reflect double standards

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Marwan Al Qasbi Saturday described a U.N. Security Council resolution on Monday's massacre of Palestinians in Jerusalem as good start, but said "we have to remain alert and should benefit from the Security Council's reaction with regard to the Middle East region's issues over the past weeks."

Qasbi, replying to reporters' questions after seeing off Iraqi Foreign Minister Tariq Aziz who paid a short visit to Amman, said it was the first time that Israel was sanctioned by the Security Council since 1982 but "the condemnation was late to come."

Qasbi stressed the importance for the council to deal with one standard and one criteria with regard to the region's questions so that comprehensive peace and justice can be established.

Qasbi expressed hope that an envoy of the U.N. secretary-

general will visit the region and present an objective and realistic report about the events of the past week in Jerusalem. The report, he said, should be dealt with by the Security Council and in cooperation with the U.N. secretary-general.

Qasbi noted that earlier reports presented by U.N. envoys to the secretary-general were rejected by the council.

Aziz, the Iraqi minister, said Saturday the Security Council resolution condemning Monday's massacre shamed the United Nations.

"The resolution is a shame on the U.N. and the Security Council," Aziz told reporters after arriving in Amman for talks on the Gulf crisis.

"It strengthens a known Arab perception that to the United States and its Western allies, Arab blood is less important than the oil they want to control," he said.

"It also represents the double

King voices deep pride in Jordan's national cohesion

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein Saturday presided over a Cabinet meeting during which a general review was made of the most important events in the Middle East in general, especially those in the occupied Arab territories, the Gulf and Lebanon.

The domestic situation in Jordan was reviewed and in this regard the King commended the cohesion displayed by the various sectors of the Jordanian people who have maintained a strong unity in the face of crises.

The King expressed deep satisfaction with and pride in the manner in which the Jordanian people exercise the democratic process and the general practices within the framework of public freedoms.

The King emphasised total confidence that the national character which is under preparation

will open the way for further organisation of political life in a manner that would ensure for everyone a full and fruitful role to contribute towards the construction of an integrated democratic society.

The King directed the government to take whatever steps needed to protect the Jordanian society and to support the armed forces by speeding up the expansion of the People's Army's activities to enable all citizens to exercise their role in defending their homeland and future.

Referring to the events in Jerusalem last Monday, the King said that Jordan was determined to extend support for the Palestinian people to achieve their legitimate rights in freedom and in liberating themselves from occupation and building their independent state in Palestine.

The King urged the government to take whatever is necessary at the international level to guarantee security and protection for the Palestinian people and to enable them to regain their rights.

On the Gulf crisis, the King said it was of concern to all Arabs and Muslims in the world. Therefore, there is an urgent need for a peaceful settlement, ensuring the security for the Arab Nation so that it can contribute towards the new world order which is being formulated and one that can end all regional disputes in a fair manner.

The King asked the government to pursue efforts towards overcoming obstacles facing Jordan and to press ahead with plans to resolve all problems facing Jordan under the present critical circumstances.

Iraqi children denounce Bush and Thatcher

Combined agency dispatches

BAGHDAD — Thousands of Iraqi children demonstrated with empty milk bottles and burned effigies of U.S. President George Bush and British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher outside their Baghdad embassies Saturday.

The demonstration, during which the children also burned British and American flags and delivered letters to the embassies protesting "the economic siege imposed by the U.S. and its allies against the Iraqi children," took place on Iraq's National Children's Day.

The children, between five and 12, called for the lifting of sanctions imposed by the United Nations.

Two separate marches converged on the embassies, denouncing Bush and cheering Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein.

The children, estimated by witnesses to number tens of thousands, also carried Iraqi and Palestinian flags and pictures of Saddam. Some held roses and olive branches.

The demonstrations were organised by student unions, schools and women's groups. They followed Saddam's open message on Friday in which he held Western leaders responsible for the deaths of any children from lack of food or medicine (see page 2).

In other Gulf developments:

British Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd and Egypt's President Hosni Mubarak Saturday dismissed Iraq's insistence on linking the Gulf crisis with the Palestinian problem, a foreign affairs official said in Cairo.

"Their positions are almost identical," the official told reporters after Mubarak and Hurd discussed the Gulf crisis for more than 90 minutes behind closed doors.

Both wanted to see the crisis resolved peacefully, he said.

The U.S. Defence Department Friday denied a published report that it was planning a four-day blitz next month involving U.S. other Western and Arab forces against Iraq.

"It simply isn't true. There is no 'Operation Night Camel' on the (planning) board," said a senior Pentagon official, who asked not to be identified.

The official made the unusual comment on military plans when asked about a report in a leading French news magazine, the weekly L'Express, quoting an unidentified aide to U.S. Defence Secretary Dick Cheney.

— Iraq has bulldozed a network of roads through about 480 kilometres of desert in Kuwait and adjacent sections of Iraq in preparation for a potential attack, U.S. television reported Friday.

ABC News, quoting Defence Department and U.S. intelligence sources, said Iraqi forces had completed the bulldozing within the past several days and were building concrete shelters along the roads to protect troops and equipment from attack.

— Dropping a one-megaton nuclear bomb on Baghdad would immediately kill 2.3 million people and injure nearly 1.3 million others, a Nobel-prize-winning group said Saturday.

The estimate was reached by the

Badran, U.N. envoy discuss sanctions aid

AMMAN (J.T.) — A former U.N. official met Prime Minister Mudar Badran Saturday to discuss the economic damage Jordan has suffered by enforcing sanctions against Iraq.

Jean Ripert would brief U.N. Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar about Jordan's losses to help speed up payment of compensation.

Ripert told reporters after the meeting:

"We had an important meeting with the prime minister, attended by the minister of finance and the minister of industry and trade. In the last few days I discussed with these ministers the implementation of my mission and what are exactly the consequences of the implementation of the embargo on Iraq and what can be done."

"But discussion with the prime minister put everything in proper perspective. We in particular discussed the implementation of the embargo and what is to be done by the government and some of the difficulties, and the prime minister expressed determination on the implementation of Resolution 661."

Iraq was Jordan's biggest trading partner before the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait Aug. 2. The invasion resulted in a U.N. trade embargo with Baghdad which has blighted the economies of the so-called frontline states of Jordan, Egypt and Turkey.

Ripert, a Frenchman, said he would "urge countries which have shown willingness to help

Jordan to compensate the losses."

Badran explained to Ripert Jordan's heavy losses in trade, exports, imports and industry and the short- and long-term effects on its economy of complying with the embargo, the Jordan News Agency, Petra, said.

A U.N. spokesman said Wednesday Ripert had been sent to recommend ways to help Jordan surmount losses from observance of sanctions imposed on Iraq.

Jordan, which has served as a waystation for hundreds of thousands of people, mainly Arabs and Asians, fleeing Iraq and Kuwait, told the U.N. Security Council in August it would suffer annual losses close to \$2 billion.

The Security Council Sanctions Committee last month recommended that Perez de Cuellar assess the economic effects on Jordan and make recommendations for appropriate remedies.

It said all states should provide Jordan with urgent technical, financial and other assistance based on the assessment. Ripert, assisted by U.N. officials, will submit a report later this month, the United Nations said.

A task force of wealthy nations set up by the United States to funnel aid to frontline states encircling Iraq smoothed over their differences but apparently

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U.N. keeps Gulf unity to condemn Israel, but rift opens

Combined agency dispatches

UNITED NATIONS — The Security Council has kept its unity in the Gulf crisis by unanimously condemning Israel for killing scores of Palestinian prisoners but cracks appeared after its call for a U.N. investigation.

The key issue emerging after a week of marathon negotiations on how the council should respond to Monday's violence in occupied Jerusalem is the role of an inquiry mission to be sent to the occupied territories.

The council, besides condemning violence by Israeli police against Palestinian demonstrators in Jerusalem last Monday, called for a report before the end of the month from the mission sent by Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar.

The resolution won the support of the United States which often casts a council veto to defend longtime ally Israel.

But doubt arose soon after the vote late Friday when U.S. Ambassador Thomas Pickering said Washington expected the mission "to examine the circumstances of the Oct. 8 incident

(in Jerusalem) and report back," and did not comment on the wider mandate.

According to a statement read by Security Council President David Hannay of Britain, Perez de Cuellar was to examine "similar developments in the occupied territories" and recommend ways to ensure the safety and protection of Palestinian civilians there (see page 2).

French Ambassador Pierre-Louis Blanc underlined this point when he said the mission must allow members to determine proper measures to protect and improve the Palestinians' situation.

The resolution was based on a much-amended text drawn up by the United States to avoid having to veto a tough draft sponsored by non-aligned countries that would have put full responsibility for the Jerusalem violence on Israel and sent members of the Security Council to the region to investigate.

Both Britain and France had warned the Bush administration that if it again vetoed a resolution critical of Israel Washington would severely damage the U.S.-led coalition of Arab and other

nations confronting Iraq in the Gulf.

Perez de Cuellar has nominated three of his aides to form a mission to the occupied territories as mandated by the Security Council.

They are Jean-Claude Aime, a Haitian senior official in the secretary general's office who made a similar trip last June, but whose report was never debated publicly by the council; Gian-domenico Picco, an Italian who serves as one of his special assistants and was closely involved in Iran-Iraq peace negotiations; and Lisa Buttenheim, another member of his executive office.

Israel is angry and dismayed at the Security Council condemnation but would not immediately reject a U.N. investigating mission, a spokesman for Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir said Saturday.

Spokesman Avi Pazner said the government's anger was aroused because the resolution was "without any reason or justification" since the police opened fire after a stoning attack by Palestinians that injured more than 30 Jews

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Aoun ends mutiny, but may face trial

Combined agency dispatches

BEIRUT — Rebel General Michel Aoun will be prevented from leaving Lebanon immediately and may face criminal charges, a Lebanese government source told Reuters Saturday.

Aoun is sheltering in the French embassy and has been promised asylum by Paris. He fled there after Syrian and Lebanese government forces attacked his stronghold.

"The cabinet meeting decided to prevent the renegade general from leaving Lebanon before the judiciary authorities look into criminal and robbery charges against him," a ministerial source said.

"These measures are temporary and the judiciary will study the case and take the appropriate measures against him."

The source said Aoun could be punished for refusing to submit to the authority of President Elias Hrawi.

Aoun surrendered Saturday shortly after thousands of Syrian and Lebanese troops thrust into his area to topple him. Damascus also sent bombers pounding his

headquarters.

The 54-year-old general fled to the embassy and France later announced it had granted him political asylum.

A government source said earlier Hrawi's administration would ask Paris for guarantees that Aoun would be banned from any political activity in France.

Another condition was that Aoun return some \$75 million of public money which Hrawi's government says he has retained.

Syrian and Lebanese troops encircled the French embassy where Aoun, his family and aides were sheltering. They barred people from approaching the embassy compound.

Syria also said the Lebanese government would put Aoun on trial.

The official Syrian News Agency (SANA) said: "Aoun wanted to cover his collapse by asking his troops to join the legitimacy (government of Hrawi) and to bargain on this..."

"But the Lebanese legitimacy rejected any form of bargaining with Aoun and insisted on trying him and his aides for the crimes they committed."

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PLO disappointed with U.N. resolution

Combined agency dispatches

TUNIS — The Palestine Central Council (PCC) condemned Saturday that the Israeli-occupied territories be placed under international protection and urged escalation of the Palestinian uprising.

"It's essential to furnish the intifada with all the political and financial means needed so that it can be intensified and overcome various obstacles," the council said.

The 90-member council concluded an emergency meeting late Thursday, but did not issue its final communiqué until Saturday. It was published by Wafa, the Palestinian news agency.

The council also said a solution to the Gulf crisis must be coupled with serious action on the Palestinian problem.

The statement endorsed Iraq's peace plan of Aug. 12 and made no specific demand for an Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait.

The council said Palestinians stood on Iraq's side against the U.N. blockade and the U.S. military presence in the Gulf.

"The council affirmed that international legality is an inseparable whole," the statement said.

"That means action to find a peaceful political solution to the

Gulf crisis and at the same time a start to serious action to solve the Middle East crisis, the essence of which is the Palestinian issue, in addition to Lebanon and the Golan, on the basis of President Saddam Hussein's initiative," it added.

Earlier Saturday, a senior PLO official said the United States had prevented the U.N. Security Council from responding appropriately to the killings of scores of Palestinians Monday during protests in Jerusalem.

Yasser Abd Rabbo, a member of the Palestine Liberation Organisation's (PLO) Executive Committee, said the resolution adopted Friday was "insufficient" even though it condemned the actions of Israeli police.

"The United States prevented the Security Council from assuming its responsibility and adopting a pertinent resolution concerning the territories occupied by Israel," Rabbo said.

He also complained that the resolution envisaged an inquiry commission organised the U.N. secretary-general, rather than by the Security Council. He attributed this decision, which the PLO opposed, to "great pressure" exerted by U.S. President

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Egypt buries Mahjoub, hunts for his assassins

CAIRO (Agencies) — Egypt gave heroes' funerals Saturday to the speaker of its parliament and four security men shot down with him in a downtown Cairo ambush. Speculation continued over who sent the assassins, and why.

Rifat Al Mahjoub, speaker of the People's Assembly slain Friday, was the first Egyptian politician assassinated since Muslim extremists shot President Anwar Sadat at a military parade on Oct. 6, 1980.

President Hosni Mubarak, walking solemnly in the front row of an estimated 1,000 mourners, led Saturday's state funeral in Cairo's Nasr City district, where Sadat's procession also took place.

Security was tight, with hundreds of military police in red berets, white-uniformed central security police and plainclothesmen ensuring that the rite passed uneventfully.

Four gunmen riding two motorbikes killed Mahjoub and the others in a hail of gunfire before a luxury hotel in downtown Cairo. Under Egypt's constitution, the 64-year-old speaker was first in the line of succession to the presidency because Mubarak has not named a vice president.

Egyptian security continued a dragnet for the assassins on Saturday. Policemen stopped motorcyclists on Cairo's streets looking for the assassins who

escaped on two Suzuki motor-

bikes. At the funeral, security forces sealed off all streets leading to the mosque where the service was held and lined the 500-metre procession route.

Mubarak, flanked by the speaker's son and the father of the bodyguard who died in the car seat at Mahjoub's side, led the procession.

British Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd joined the mourners after talks with Mubarak on the Gulf crisis.

The death toll rose to six with the death of Mahjoub's chauffeur.

There remained no answer as to who was behind the ambush. Hassan Abu Basha, a former interior minister in charge of internal security, told the state-run newspaper Al-Ahram he believed Iraq was behind Mahjoub's death.

He said the perpetrators possibly belonged to the Fateh Revolutionary Council, a radical Palestinian faction led by Abu Nidal. But Abu Basha, who was badly wounded by Islamic militants in 1987, said the assassins probably had help from people in Egypt.

Al-Ahram, quoting police sources, reported last Monday that local Muslim extremists had provided weapons and explosives to five Palestinians of a cadre

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Text of U.N. resolution on Jerusalem massacre

UNITED NATIONS (R) — Following is the text of a Security Council resolution adopted late Friday and an accompanying statement from the president of the council. The vote on the resolution was unanimous.

The Security Council,

RECALLING its Resolutions 476 (1980) and 478 (1980) REAFFIRMING that a just and lasting solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict must be based on its Resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973) through an active negotiating process which takes into account the

right to security for all states in the region, including Israel, as well as the legitimate political rights of the Palestinian people.

TAKING into consideration the statement of the secretary-general relative to the purpose of the mission he is sending to the region and conveyed to the council by the president on 12 October, 1990;

1. Expresses alarm at the violence which took place on 8 October at Haram Al Sharif and other holy places of Jerusalem resulting in over 20 Palestinian deaths and to the injury of more than 150 people, including Palestinian civilians and innocent worshippers.

2. Condemns especially the acts of violence committed by the Israeli security forces resulting in injuries and loss of human life;

3. Calls upon Israel, the occupying power, to abide scrupulously by its legal obligations and responsibilities under the Fourth Geneva Convention, which is applicable to all the territories occupied by Israel since 1967;

4. Requests, in connection with the decision of the secretary-general to send a mission to the region, which the council welcomes, that he submit a

report to it before the end of October 1990 containing his findings and conclusions and that he use as appropriate all of the resources of the United Nations in the region in carrying out the mission.

Following is an accompanying statement from Security Council President David Hannay of Britain:

"In the informal consultations of members of the council which led up to the consideration of this draft resolution, the secretary-general explained that the purpose of the mission which he would be

sending to the region would be to look into the circumstances surrounding the recent tragic events in Jerusalem and other similar developments in the occupied territories, and to submit by the 24 October 1990 a report containing findings and recommendations to the council on ways and means for ensuring the safety and protection of the Palestinian civilians under Israeli occupation. He recalled, however, that under the Fourth Geneva Convention, the principal responsibility for ensuring the protection of the Palestinians rested with the occupying power, namely Israel.

Walsh defends keeping back secrets

WASHINGTON (R) — The top U.S. prosecutor said Friday that he stood by his controversial decision to withhold secret information from the Iran-contra criminal case against a former Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) official, a move that scuttled the case.

Attorney general Dick Thornburgh last year blocked the disclosure of the classified national security information in the case against Joseph Fernandez, a former CIA station chief in Costa Rica.

Fernandez worked closely with former White House aide Oliver North in setting up an airstrip for the clandestine arms supply network for the Nicaraguan contras in 1985-86, when Congress had outlawed U.S. military assistance to the rebels.

Fernandez was charged with four counts of obstruction and lying to his superiors at the CIA and to the Tower commission appointed by then-president Ronald Reagan in 1986 to investigate the scandal involving the use of profits from sales of arms to Iran to buy weapons for the contras.

Thornburgh said he reviewed the decision after a U.S. appellate court last month upheld the dismissal of all charges against Fernandez, ruling that the information was crucial to his defence and to a fair trial.

The Justice Department said Thornburgh went back to the U.S. intelligence agencies and they agreed that disclosure of the information could cause "potentially serious damage to the national security."

Thornburgh also warned that additional secret information may be revealed at trial.

The department said an unidentified senior U.S. official described the potential harm as "devastating." It did not give any evidence backing up the claim.

At issue in the dispute was classified information about CIA facilities and operations in Costa Rica.

The Iran-contra independent special prosecutor, Lawrence Walsh, sharply criticised the decision in a statement, saying it showed "a lack of concern for applying the rule of law to officials in the intelligence community."

Saddam: U.S. trying to enslave Iraqi children

NICOSIA (AP) — Iraqi President Saddam Hussein has told his country's children that U.S. President George Bush was trying to enslave them and their parents through the United Nations economic blockade.

In a speech marking the Iraqi National Children's Day, Saddam urged the children to bear with candy and milk shortages caused by the embargo, imposed following Iraq's Aug. 2 invasion of Kuwait.

"I know that you like sweets despite the harm they cause to your beautiful teeth, and that the younger among you live on imported milk," Saddam said in the speech, read by an announcer on government-run television and radio, and monitored in Nicosia.

"There is now a shortage of these items because of the siege imposed by Bush and the Zionists, and we are doing what we can to alleviate the shortages. But the shortages are less harmful than what Bush wants for you," the Iraqi leader said.

"He wants to enslave you, after enslaving your fathers and mothers. He wants to control your present in order to be able to control your future," he said.

"We can cope, but what's most important is our pride and dignity," he said.

Iraqi authorities have said there is a milk shortage, but Western journalists who have visited Baghdad recently saw stores well stocked with milk.

Saddam said that world leaders who gathered in New York to mark International Children's Day Oct. 3 were responsible for the "tragedies of hunger and death" among children worldwide "for which they shed so many crocodile tears."

"The \$20 billion said to have been spent so far in the troops build-up in the Gulf is the sort of money these leaders said they lacked in order to put an end to these tragedies," Saddam said.

He said ousted Kuwaiti ruler Sheikh Jaber Al Ahmad Al Sabah, "blinded by the wealth stolen from Iraq, thought he could tamper with Iraq's sacred values through economy and money in an attempt not only to enslave and desecrate the lives of the Iraqi parents, but the lives of their children too."

The accusation that Kuwait was unlawfully pumping crude oil from an oilfield on the Iraq-Kuwait border was one of Baghdad's pretexts to invade Kuwait.

The Kuwait invasion "preserved not only the freedom of the Iraqi children and women, but created an opportunity for a freedom as wide as the Arab Homeland and the whole world. God willing," Saddam said.

Saddam was speaking on the eve of Iraqi children's day, which commemorates the deaths of 39 Iraqi schoolchildren during the Iran-Iraq war.

The children died when an Iranian surface-to-surface missile hit their school in Baghdad's Dora district on Oct. 13, 1987. Iraq urged foreign countries Friday to release frozen Iraqi assets to allow it to buy milk, medicine and food, the Iraqi News Agency (INA) reported.

Acting Finance and Trade Minister Mohammad Mehdi Saleh, quoted by INA, said the freezing of Iraqi assets following Iraq's invasion of Kuwait was irresponsible.

"We call on all concerned countries and parties... to lift the freeze on the mentioned assets and help use this money for buying milk, medicine and food for the Iraqi people," he added. "That way their positions would be in harmony with the principles of human rights and civil values."

The United States and the European Community froze Iraqi and Kuwaiti assets shortly after the invasion. Most other countries followed suit.

Ousted regime promises democracy to Kuwaitis

JEDDAH (Agencies) — Kuwait's exiled rulers promised Saturday to restore a democratic parliament when their emirate is freed from Iraqi occupation but said political differences must be silenced until then.

Sheikh Saad Abdullah Al Sabah, the toppled crown prince, told some 700 prominent exiles gathered in this Saudi city that the 1962 democratic constitution would be fully restored when they returned to Kuwait.

"The people of Kuwait can only be rewarded for their trust and loyalty by further trust," said Sheikh Saad, the ousted prime minister.

"National unity will be the groundwork to build our future Kuwait," he said.

The 1962 constitution allowed an elected parliament. The emir, Sheikh Jaber Al Ahmad Al Sabah, dissolved it in 1986 at the height of the Iran-Iraq war, alleging an international conspiracy against Kuwait.

The opposition boycotted last June's elections for a new assembly in which one-third of the 75 members were appointed by the emir.

A prominent leader of the democratic opposition, Ahmad Al Khatib, said he was pleased with the announcement.

"We hope that within days or weeks we shall see changes that will make us happy and that, God willing, what was said today will be implemented," he told reporters.

Sheikh Saad urged politicians, some of whom have started openly criticising the dominance of the ruling Al Sabah family, to silence differences for the sake of the struggle to recapture the emirate from Iraq.

"It would not be patriotic that any of us disparage our unity," he said.

"Show the world you are united in a single front," Sheikh Jaber told the exiles in white robes and headaddresses at Jeddah's grand conference hall.

"Stay firm do not grieve. I hope that we shall soon gather again in the land of love and peace — the state of Kuwait," the emir said.

Sheikh Saad called the meeting, the first since the Iraqi invasion 10 weeks ago, to discuss ways of liberating and rebuilding Kuwait.

Hundreds of young men and women demonstrated outside the conference palace, raising banners of support for the emir and shouting slogans calling for the liberation of Kuwait.

They include the critics that the invasion caught locked in confrontation with the government over the need for a return to the Western-style democracy prescribed in the 1962 constitution.

Their parliament had been suspended in 1986, because of the pressure of opposition deputies at a time when the country was target of a rabid extremist campaign meant to break off Kuwait's support for Iraq in its

eight-year Gulf war with Iran. The opposition figures insisted even then that they still were loyal to the emir. In statements over the last few weeks, many have maintained that line. Some have even said they have temporarily shelved their opposition.

Reports in the immediate wake of the invasion that Baghdad would find the opposition figures ready to form a government, to replace the Al Sabah rule have never materialised.

But some of the critics, like Khatib, have started pushing for the democratic reforms even before the end of the Iraqi occupation.

Sheikh Saad said the occupation of Kuwait was no longer a Kuwaiti or a Gulf problem but an international one. "The people of the whole world are backing us and have amassed troops to repel the aggression," he said.

He repeated Kuwait's conditions for political settlement:

— Kuwait sovereignty and territorial integrity cannot be liable to negotiation or bargaining.

— Full implementation of U.N. Security Council resolutions calling for unconditional Iraqi withdrawal and the return of the legitimate government.

— Reparation for all damages Iraq has caused Kuwait.

— The unconditional Iraqi withdrawal should precede any attempt for a peaceful solution to the conflict.

India says it can feed non-Indians in Iraq

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — Enough food is left over from an Indian shipment to its citizens stranded in Iraq and Kuwait that India will feed citizens of other nations, Indian diplomats said Friday.

Iraq has announced, and diplomats have confirmed, that it stopped feeding foreign nationals trapped there and Kuwait on Oct. 1.

India received permission from the Security Council's committee on sanctions to send a ship loaded with 10,000 tonnes of food, which was enough to feed the 180,000 stranded Indians for three months.

Meanwhile, India began airlifting its people out of Iraq and Kuwait and has already brought out 127,000.

"We were able to establish a kind of air bridge to the region," said Ambassador T. Prabhakar Menon, the second-ranking Indian diplomat at their U.N. mission.

"We have enough food left over from the consignment we sent to our nationals, and we are happy to share it," Prabhakar said.

Other nations merely have to contact Indian officials to make arrangements for the food-sharing, he said.

"Indian Red Cross and Indian embassy staff have supervised the operation, from the arrival of the ship down to the distribution of the food, Menon said, so it gets to the people for whom it is

intended. He said Iraqi authorities have not interfered. Vietnam had been especially concerned about its 17,000 workers stranded in Iraq.

"They are under very difficult conditions," said Dinh Thi Minh Huynh, a counselor at Vietnam's U.N. mission. "Some of them are sick."

In late September, Baghdad announced that it would stop providing food to the Vietnamese and other foreign nationals trapped in Iraq after its Aug. 2 invasion of Kuwait.

The United Nations has imposed a blockade against Iraq which has kept out all but a trickle of supplies.

Huynh said she has received confirmation from Vietnam's embassy in Baghdad that food was cut off. No deaths have been reported yet, she said.

Vietnam has appealed to the Security Council's committee on sanctions for permission to send two ships with 500 tonnes of food to Iraq, which would also bring home about 1,000 of the Vietnamese.

The committee met Thursday, heard India's offer, and has decided to concentrate on bringing out the foreigners and using India's food stock to feed them until they are repatriated, a source on the committee said.

The committee has not given Vietnam or other nations permission to send food into Iraq or Kuwait.

Assassin's bullet common form of protest in Egypt

By William C. Mann
The Associated Press

CAIRO — The assassin's bullet and other forms of political violence have been frequently used tools of protest in Egypt this century.

Mostly the mayhem has been in the cause of Egyptian and Arab nationalism or Islamic extremism. Muslim fanatics fired the bullets that killed President Anwar Sadat and seven people with him on a military viewing stand in 1981.

Since 1910, when a nationalist liquidated Prime Minister Butros Pacha Ghali, violence motivated by politics has killed at least 30 government ministers, prominent Egyptians and Britons and ordinary civilians.

In 1985, a Egyptian border police sergeant in the Sinai killed seven Israelis because he said they spied for their government.

Egyptian authorities said the

latest episode, Friday's death of the parliament speaker on a Nile-side Cairo street, could have been perpetrated either by nationalists or religious zealots.

But they note the Gulf crisis has thrown a new variable into the formula that normally concocts home-grown assassins. Egypt led Arab opposition to Iraq's takeover of Kuwait. Pro-Iraqis could have killed Rifaat Al Mahjoub, speaker of the People's Assembly and second to President Hosni Mubarak in the official hierarchy, and three security men.

"One possibility is an outside operation, but the gangs for these operations are under control," said Abdul Halim Musa, the country's top policeman as interior minister.

But when Musa reported last week the arrest of more than 35 alleged agents sent by Iraq to assassinate and cause general upset, he admitted that others remained on the loose.

He said they would be caught, but no further arrests have been announced.

Another possible instigator of Friday's four motorbike-riding assassins, who escaped, "are our brothers of the gammaat," Musa said. The word, Arabic for "gangs," denotes violence-prone Muslim activist organisation.

It would be a great improvement in their effectiveness as extremists compared with other outings in recent years. Muslim extremists were blamed for a bomb ambush last year that missed then-Interior Minister Zaki Badr. They shot at two former interior ministers and a government magazine editor in 1987. Only ex-Minister Abu Basma was hurt seriously.

Musa did not mention a third possibility: Egypt's revolution. The government claims to have destroyed that Arab nationalist group. But the attack had some earmarks

of four Egypt's revolution forays in the mid-1980s that killed two Israelis and left six Israeli and American diplomats wounded.

It also resembled in several ways an assault on an Israeli tour bus last February by men speaking Arabic with Palestinian accents. They trailed the bus from the Israeli border, through Sinai and into mainland Egypt, ran it off the road, climbed aboard and sprayed automatic rifle fire into the holidaymakers. Nine died.

A roster of the century's assassination victims in Egypt shows a diverse group.

Sixteen were Israelis: two tourist groups and two staff members of Israel's Cairo embassy.

Two were British diplomats: Sir Lee Stack, governor-general of Sudan, shot down by an Egyptian nationalist in 1924 with Egypt's army commander; and Lord Moyne of

the wealthy Irish Guinness brewing clan, by Jewish terrorists in 1944. Moyne's murderers escaped on a bicycle, were caught by an Egyptian policeman and hanged four months later. Only in 1975 did Sadat return their bodies to Israel, where they were mourned as heroes and buried beside founders of the state.

Ghali and two other officials were shot for collaborating with Egypt's British occupiers in the first half-century. One was Prime Minister Ahmad Maher, slain on the floor of parliament for giving in to British demands and declaring war on Germany in the early 1940s. And Sadat was said to have joined the conspiracy that led to the assassination of Finance Minister Amin Osman in 1946.

In 1948, Prime Minister Mustafa Al Nokrashy, who doubled as interior minister, fell to an assassin's bullet while

waiting for an elevator in the Interior Ministry.

The fundamentalist Muslim Brotherhood, founded 20 years earlier in Egypt, was blamed. Shortly afterwards, its supreme guide, Sheikh Hassan Al Banna, was cut down on downtown Cairo's Ramses Street, allegedly by Egyptian government gunmen.

The Brotherhood also figured in the century's most unsuccessful assassination attempt.

In 1954, Brotherhood member Mahmoud Abdul Latif fired at Jamal Abdul Nasser, republican Egypt's first president, as he spoke from the same Alexandria balcony where two years later he would proclaim nationalisation of the Suez Canal.

The fusillade missed. Nasser, incensed, banned the organisation, executed six members and arrested thousands, many of whom were tortured.

Millions of Iranians mourn Palestinians killed by Israelis

NICOSIA (AP) — Millions of "immediate international condemnation" Iranian leaders considered Israel and the United States arch-enemies of the Islamic republic, and Israel Washington's puppet in the Mideast.

But within Iran Rafsanjani is considered a pragmatist who wants to tone down his country's revolutionary fervour and mend ties with the West to attract investment and technology.

His diatribe was aimed at, appealing hardliners excluded from elections to a key constitutional body earlier this week.

Calling for unity among Muslims to prevent such incidents, Rafsanjani said: "If the world of Islam is united, at least on immediate problems, these kinds of things will never happen."

"The one billion Muslims of the world... with their vast oil and gas reserves, have a great weapon in their possession, which no other weapon can match. But the world of Islam does not use this," Rafsanjani said.

To placate the bitter radicals, Iran's spiritual leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, Rafsanjani's political ally, Thursday called for the nationwide day of mourning.

The radical-dominated Majlis, or parliament, Wednesday called for holy war to liberate the Palestinian homeland. A statement signed by 160 legislators declared that "jihad and martyrdom are the only ways for nations to attain their rights."

He expressed outrage that the Israeli action was not universally condemned, while Iraq's Aug. 2 invasion of Kuwait prompted an

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel: 773111-19

PROGRAMME ONE

15:30 Koran
15:45 Programme review
15:55 Children programme
17:10 Football
17:15 News summary
18:10 Local programme
18:20 Programme review
18:30 News in Arabic
20:30 Arabic series
21:30 Programme review
21:45 Local programme
22:30 News summary in Arabic

PROGRAMME TWO

19:25 Cartoons
18:10 Short film
19:00 News in French
19:15 Classical music
19:30 News in Hebrew
19:45 Varieties programme
20:00 News in Arabic
21:10 Documentary: "The Secret History of Oil"

PRAYER TIMES

06:17 Fajr
06:34 (Sunrise) Dhuha
11:22 Dhuhr
14:37 'Asr
17:18 Maghrib
18:27 'Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church Swellish, Tel. 810740
Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 632785
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590.
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440.
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757
Terrasanta Church Tel. 622366
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541.
Anglican Church Tel. 625383, Tel. 628543.
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331.
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261.
St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751.
Assumption International Church Tel. 683236.
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 811295.
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Tel. 815817 and 654932.

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.
It will be partly cloudy and winds will be northwesterly moderate to fresh. In Aqaba, winds will be northerly moderate and seas calm.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

AMMAN

Min./max. temp.
Amman 13 / 23
Aqaba 17 / 29
Desert 11 / 20
Jordan Valley 20 / 32

Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 23, Aqaba 29. Humidity readings: Amman 55 per cent, Aqaba 28 per cent.

USEFUL NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:
Dr. Khalid Mu'addi 743500
Dr. Awni Hawandeh 776665
Dr. Mohammad Al Shawab 658878
Dr. Isam Hawandeh 624630
First pharmacy 625230
Ferdows pharmacy 778336
Al Asma pharmacy 637055
Nasrallah pharmacy 625672
Al Salam pharmacy 636730
Yacoub pharmacy 644946
Shamsi pharmacy 637660

REBUD:
Dr. Ali Al Samman (—)
Al Shamsi pharmacy (985238)

ZARQA:

Dr. Yousef Awad (—)
Khalifah pharmacy 983417

EMERGENCIES

Civil Defence Department 661111
Civil Defence Immediate
Rescue 630341
Civil Defence Emergency 199
Fire Brigade 891228
Blood Bank 771211
Highway Police 843402
Traffic Police 896390
Public Security Department 630321
Hotel Complaints 605800
Price Complaints 661176
Water and Sewerage
Complaints 874767
Amman Municipality
Complaints 787111
Telephone Information
(directory assistance) 121
Overseas Calls 010230
Central Amman Telephone
Repairs 623101
Abdullah Telephone Repairs 661101
Jordan Television 771111
Radio Jordan 771111
Water Authority 660100

Jordan Electricity Authority

815615
Electric power 636381
RJ Flight Information 08-53200
Queen Alia Intl. Airport 08-53200

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:
Hussein Medical Centre 813813/32
Khalid Maternity, J. Amn 644281/6
Al-Zahra Maternity, J. Amn 642441/2
Jabal Amman Maternity 642562
Malhas, J. Amman 636140
Palestine, Shamsi 664171/4
Shamsi Hospital 669131
University Hospital 645845
Al-Musheir Hospital 667271/9
The Islamic, Abdali 666127/1
Al-Ahli, Abdali 664164/6
Italian, Al-Muhajreen 777101/3
Al-Bashir, J. Ashrafieh 775112/6
Army, Marja 891612/5
Queen Alia Hospital 662405/0
Amal Hospital 674153
ZARQA:
Zarqa Govt. Hospital (09)983323
Zarqa National Hospital (09)991071
Ben Sina Hospital (09)986732
REBUD:
Princess Basma Hospital (02)735555

Greek Catholic Hospital

(02)727275
En Al Najef Hospital (02)747100
AQABA:
Princess Haya Hospital (03)914111

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport. Tel. (08)53200-5, where it should always be verified.

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

09:45 Doha (RJ)
10:00 Jeddah (RJ)
10:30 Cairo (RJ)
10:45 Abu Dhabi, Dubai (RJ)
10:55 Bahrain (RJ)
11:00 Cairo (RJ)
11:45 Paris, Rome (RJ)
17:45 Madrid (RJ)
18:00 New York, Amsterdam (RJ)
18:15 Istanbul (RJ)
18:45 Brussels, Geneva (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

05:35 Rome (AZ)
05:45 Larnaca (CY)
11:00 Jeddah (SV)
12:20 Cairo (MS)
13:30 Tripoli (LN)
16:30 Doha (EK)
19:25 Frankfurt (LH)
20:35 Beirut (ME)
22:45 Athens (OA)

DEPARTURES

Royal

Controversial donation may put Grindlays Bank on boycott list

By Sana Atiyeh

Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Whether the branches of Grindlays Bank, which belongs to the Australia and New Zealand banking group ANZ, would continue to work in the Arab World is a subject of discussion on the agenda this week in a regular meeting of the Arab League officers for the boycott of Israel which opened Saturday in Damascus.

In a memorandum to the regional officers' meeting, the Arab League said that the Australian-based ANZ Grindlays had contributed over \$100,000 to the Zionist movement in Australia to celebrate the 42nd anniversary of the establishment of the state of Israel.

Based on a request from the state of Palestine, the Arab League called on the regional officers at the Arab Office for the Boycott of Israel — who meet every six months — to take the proper decision on whether Grindlays Bank should be added to the Arab boycott list according to resolution 4 passed at the 27th session of the regional officers.

The resolution stipulates: "To study the case of everyone who donates money, even if only once — in small or large amounts — to Zionist organisations or for Israel's interests... and to take the necessary measures according to the

boycott principles and regulations."

The Arab League memorandum, which was made available to the Jordan Times, said that the bank had denied to the Jordanian Regional Boycott Office that it had any relations with Israel that would violate the general principles of the Arab boycott.

"But the bank did not provide detailed information on its relationship with Israel according to the specific regulations of the boycott office concerning foreign banks because no request was made to that effect at the time," the memo stated.

According to the document, the Arab League had learned from ANZ Grindlays Bank Regional Office in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) in Dubai that the headquarters of the bank had donated money to a Jewish society in Australia as part of charity contributions made to other societies in other parts of the world, including the Arab World.

According to informed sources who insisted on anonymity, the Palestine ambassador to the UAE had asked ANZ Grindlays there to contribute a donation to Arab charity societies "to prove the good intentions of the bank" after he learned that it had made the donation to the Zionist movement in Australia.

The sources said that the bank in Australia rejected this suggestion and reported that

the money donation to the Zionist movement was made to "please the Jewish clients in Australia."

The Arab League memorandum said that the ANZ group declared that it did not make any political statements or supported any political activities, adding that the bank had made previous contributions to the international Red Crescent Society and to refugees.

It added that the UAE branch suggested that the boycott office did not discuss the Australian bank because it did not have any relations with Israel that contradicted the regulations of the boycott of the Jewish state.

A lawyer informed on this case said that the bank could face being added to the boycott list if taken in accordance with article 2 of the unified law for the boycott of Israel.

The article stipulates that "every natural or juristic person shall be prohibited from concluding, directly or indirectly, any agreement with organisations or persons residing in Israel or carrying its citizenship or working for Israel or working for their own interest wherever they may reside if the subject matter of such an agreement consists of commercial transactions or financial dealings or any other dealing of whatever nature."

The Arab Boycott Regional Office in Amman refused comment on the matter.

Audit Bureau takes steps to reinforce energy conservation

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Audit Bureau Saturday announced that it would assign special cars to patrol streets on Thursdays and Fridays to ensure that no government-owned vehicles are used on those particular days when all government departments are closed.

Audit Bureau Director General Hashem Al Dabbas said in a statement to the Jordan News Agency, Petra, that bureau employees will be entrusted with the task of reporting in writing to Prime Minister Mudar Badran about vehicles that have been found on the streets during the two-day weekend introduced this week in the Kingdom.

The prime minister, in a stern circular to all government offices last week, warned against using government-owned vehicles at weekends and said that strict penalties would be imposed on violators.

The ban on the use of government-owned vehicles was one of a series of government measures announced recently to try to reduce energy and fuel spending in the country.

One of the measures was the introduction of a two-day weekend for all government departments and offices which went into force as of Saturday Oct. 13, 1990. Under the new measure, government offices open at 7:45 a.m. and close at 3:15 p.m., with the exception of a number of government departments whose nature of duty requires a different arrangement.

As of Saturday all commercial establishments closed at 7 p.m., but pharmacies, bakeries, clinics and gas stations, exempt from the regulation, were reported operating normally.

Restaurants, cafes, clubs, wedding halls, cinemas and other entertainment establishments closed by 11 p.m. and street lighting was to be switched off at 5 a.m.

Several government employees asked to comment on the application of the new regulations complained that the office hours were too long.

Others said that the new timing clashed with the break time at schools and created problems for the transportation of their children home.

Upon announcing the new measures, the government said that it would study the situation after some time and might introduce amendments wherever this was possible. Studies on methods for reducing energy consumption will continue too, according to the government.

When the new measures were announced the government said it would help save the country at least 20 per cent of its present oil bill, particularly in light of the dramatic rise in oil prices.

Jordan Electricity Authority (JEA) Director General Mohammad Saeed Arafah was quoted as saying that the government's measures are bound to save the country some 3550 tonnes of fuel needed to produce electricity.

Dughmi: Despite efforts Jordan is facing serious environmental problems

Jordan celebrates Arab Environmental Day

AMMAN (J.T.) — Minister of Municipal and Rural Affairs and the Environment Abdul Karim Al Dughmi Saturday warned of the grave dangers posed to the Jordanian environment in general and the water resources in the Kingdom in particular, and called for closer cooperation between the concerned authorities and Jordanian citizens to keep Jordan clean and green.

"Despite efforts to beautify Jordan, the country is now facing serious environmental problems, increasing year after year," the minister said in a statement on the eve of the Arab Environment Day celebrated Sunday.

The main sources of danger are: polluted water resources which can have direct negative consequences on the population and agriculture alike, factory waste which threatens water basins and the general environment, population growth beyond the normal rates as well as the waves of migration to Jordan and the shrinking of the agricultural lands, the minister pointed out.

The minister noted however that the Department of Environment at his ministry was maintaining close cooperation with concerned world organisations and was coordinating programmes with other government departments in Jordan and with

municipal and rural councils to protect the environment from all forms of pollution.

The Ministry of Municipal and Rural Affairs and the Environment is observing the Arab Environment Day this year under the slogan of "tree day and ways for its protection" through a week-long programme prepared in cooperation with the Ministry of Information.

The Environment Department Director Saleh Al Sharee said in a statement that development of various sectors in Jordan over the past decades had created environmental problems represented in the vast population growth, encroachment of urban regions over agricultural land and dumping of factory waste which led to water contamination of surface and underground water resources.

"The department has been preparing a national environment strategy to combat pollution in cooperation with the Royal Scientific Society and international organisations," Sharee pointed out.

Ministry of Industry and Trade Secretary General Ibrahim Badran told the Jordan News Agency, Petra, that the excessive use of motor vehicles, the extraction of minerals and the use of chemicals in industry are sources for pollution.

The Ministry of Industry and Trade, he said, is trying to provide assistance and advice to various industries in Jordan to overcome environment pollution with the help of local and foreign experts.

Dr. Adnan Abbas, Health Ministry secretary general, told Petra that the health authorities had been cooperating closely with other government offices in the field of protecting water and air from pollution, in disposing of human and industrial waste and in controlling types of food and water through laboratory testing.

Special regulations have been introduced, he said, to provide protection to workers at various industries, to eliminate rodents and insects and to control treated waste water.

Ministry of Tourism Secretary General Nassir Atallah briefed Petra on the measures taken by his department to ensure a healthy atmosphere at the tourist and archaeological sites in the Kingdom.

He said that motor vehicles had been banned from entering some important tourist areas as Wadi Rum and the Nabatean city of Petra and that only horses and horse carriages are allowed there to help prevent any poisonous gases from affecting both the tourists and the ancient places.

Oil from shale — a feasible project

By Nur Sati

Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — In recent years Jordan has been concentrating on the exploration of oil and gas in various areas throughout the Kingdom. Officials say that the abundance in oil shale could last well over 1,000 years when it is converted to oil.

40 billion metric tonnes of oil shale are said to be lying on the surface of Jordan's soil, and of that amount, four billion metric tonnes of recoverable oil and other valuable by-products of oil shale are estimated to be extractable, specialists say.

According to National Resources Authority (NRA), oil shale was not extracted and transformed into oil in the past because of a setback in investment.

Mohammad Abu Ajamieh, director general of NRA and technical advisor to the minister of energy says: "we found that to set up investment for a commercial or industrial plant based on 50,000 barrels per day production, the capital for investment would register some \$1.5 billion."

He said that there were other obstacles that delayed the project, namely "the number of critics in oil rich countries, who do not agree with processing oil shale as a source of oil."

Ajamieh added that in previous years Jordan was under two projects and the priority was given to the exploration of oil and gas while the oil shale was ranked second in the priority chart. "With the low oil prices, oil shale processing was not as feasible as it is now," he said.

Because of the high prices of oil many countries would be ready to produce oil from oil shale, officials believe. At a time when Jordan is faced with harsh cutbacks in the use of oil, Jordan's prospect of becoming

self-sufficient in oil is important.

According to Ajamieh, this project is feasible because most of the oil shale found in Jordan is shallow, which makes mining costs much less than for phosphates, for example. "All it takes is to heat the oil shale which is not a difficult process."

Although the investment capital (of \$1.5 billion) is a large sum of money, in the long-term it will prove to be cheaper for Jordan, Ajamieh says.

Oil shale is a sedimentary rock rich in kerogen and contains organic matter (kerogen mainly). When it is heated to about 500 degrees, Celsius, the rock yields oil, gas and carbon residues.

According to Ajamieh, the organic matter that accumulated at the bottom of the seas and lakes was covered by inorganic deposits such as silts and clays.

During the process of burial, heat and pressure gradually transformed the organic matter into kerogen and upon induration the rock turned into oil shale.

However, the heat and pressure that changed the organic matter into kerogen was insufficient to form crude oil. "But now we can complete what nature failed to do and that is to add heat," he said. "In other words, had oil shale been settled deeper into the earth, Jordan would have been an 'oil producing country,'" Ajamieh said.

A study conducted by NRA found that oil shale deposits in the country are very rich and one of the best in the world. Ajamieh affirms that about 10 per cent by weight (of a rock of oil shale) is recoverable. NRA officials also say that oil shale is considered the only source of sulphur in the country.

A NRA study reveals that out of 50,000 tonnes of oil

shale, 40,000 tonnes of elemental sulphur can be produced. But the significance of oil shale does not end here. The ash of the oil shale, says Ajamieh, "because it is mainly carbonate, can be ready clinker for the cement industry."

However cheap the cement would be for Jordan, "it has not been processed because two cement plants are already at work and it takes too much to start a third plant based on oil shale," Ajamieh asserts.

"There seems to be a two-sided feeling towards the prospects of processing oil shale whereby critics suggest that water is an important factor in the processing stages and thus the availability is not there. But Ajamieh says that it depends on the process. NRA studies show that by using a water cooling system some 20 million cubic metres of water per year are needed for a complex of 50,000 barrels per day, including the upgrading plant."

Although salt water cannot be used, "neither is the water for agricultural and domestic purposes used," Ajamieh says. "What we use is brackish water." In another study, based on air cooling systems, it was found that the water that was required could be reduced to five million cubic metres per year.

Officials and economists alike are optimistic at the prospect of processing oil, expressing hope that foreign investment could be made and stations could be set up, especially in Saudi Arabia cut off oil supplies to Jordan and the Kingdom has to rely on other sources of oil from other countries. But, with worldwide crude oil depletion, oil shale will become the best substitute for oil and a source of energy, specialists say. "It is a matter of time and economics," Ajamieh said.

Jordanian goes on hunger strike

AMMAN (J.T.) — As Jordan continues to witness sit-ins and protest marches in solidarity with the Palestinian people involved in a struggle against the occupation authorities, at least one man has decided to go on hunger strike to express his backing for the Palestinian struggle.

Mohammad Hassan Al Nahhas, who is staging a sit-in at the King Abdullah the Martyr Mosque in Amman, said that he had decided to go without food for an indefinite period of time to show his support for those resisting the Israeli occupation of Palestine and to back the Iraqi people now facing a U.S.-led embargo.

Al Nahhas' hunger strike which began Saturday morning followed

huge and widespread demonstrations, protests, and sit-ins at different locations in Amman and other towns to protest last Monday's massacre of 30 Palestinians at Al Aqsa Mosque in occupied Jerusalem.

About 2,000 women staged a sit-in at the Amman office of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in Shmeisani Friday to express support for the Arab people of Palestine.

Al Nahhas was reported to be raising slogans demanding that President Bush withdraw his forces from the Arabian peninsula and end the foreign forces blockade on Iraq and its children. He demanded that a blockade should instead be imposed on Israel for murdering innocent Palestinians under its rule.

Canada condemns Israel's practices

AMMAN (Petra) — A senior Canadian government official held talks in Amman Saturday with Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Marwan Al Qasem and said later that attention was focused on the situation in the Gulf and the Middle East regions.

Raymond Chretien, assistant secretary general at the Canadian Foreign Ministry, said in a statement after the meeting that his current visit to Jordan was within the framework of Canada's efforts to discover the situation in the Middle East and to learn about Jordan's views with regard to the Gulf crisis.

"The Canadian government adopted a clear stand with regard to the Gulf crisis based on respect for international law and the United Nations Security Council resolutions," said Chretien in his statement.

He said that the Canadian government realised too well the hardships facing Jordan as a result of the Gulf crisis and that contacts were under way among a number of nations on the best means to respond to the Kingdom's needs. He said that the outcome of these deliberations would be duly announced.

Asked about Canada's stand vis-à-vis Israel's brutal practices against the Palestinian people in the occupied Arab lands and the latest massacre of the worshippers at Al Aqsa Mosque, Chretien said that the Canadian foreign minister had strongly condemned Israeli authorities' use of force.

He said that Canada had contributed towards the adoption by the Security Council of its latest resolution condemning Israel's practices in the occupied Arab lands.

Ministry explains measures taken after cancelling of NMI

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Health Ministry has adopted a number of measures related to medical treatment in Jordanian hospitals following the cancellation of the National Medical Institution (NMI) which used to handle all matters related to Jordanian hospitals and their services.

According to a statement by the Health Ministry, citizens entitled to medical treatment under the health insurance system can report to Jordan University Hospital directly without being referred there by a health centre and the ministry will shoulder 70 per cent of the total cost of their medical treatment.

A ministry official told the Jordan News Agency, Petra, that normally health centres in various governorates refer cases to the Jordan University Hospital and other hospitals, and arrangements are made for patients re-

ferred by health centres to have their medical treatment free of charge.

He said that government hospital directors can, if need be, refer certain cases to Al Hussein Medical Centre and other military hospitals which have special facilities for them.

He said that the Ministry of Health would shoulder the cost of treatment at any hospital in the Kingdom in emergency cases provided that cases are reported to the Health Ministry within 24 hours after admission.

According to the spokesman, the cancellation of NMI earlier this year made it necessary for government hospitals to be returned to the Health Ministry as before the establishment of NMI in 1987, the Jordan University Hospital to the University of Jordan and the military hospitals to the Armed Forces.

Jordan exports 52,000 tonnes of produce in September

AMMAN (J.T.) — Despite the strain in Jordanian-Saudi Arabian relations following Riyadh's suspension of its oil supplies to Jordan and the reduction of the number of staff at the Jordanian embassies in Riyadh and Jeddah, Saudi Arabia had the lion's share of Jordanian agricultural exports during the past month, according to an official statistical bulletin released Saturday.

Saudi Arabia, followed by the United Arab Emirates, Qatar and Bahrain imported most of Jordan's agricultural produce during the month of September 1990, while smaller shipments went to Lebanon and the European Community countries.

The bulletin, however, pointed out that last month's total exports were 6,400 tonnes less than the previous month.

The bulletin said that total exports to various countries last month were estimated at 52,000 tonnes of fruits and mainly vegetables, earning the country some JD 7.3 million.

The bulletin also noted that last month's exports registered an increase of 10,500 tonnes compared to the total exports of agricultural produce in September 1989.

It said that Jordan's exports were made up of tomatoes, cucumbers, peppers, egg-plants, cauliflowers, melons and potatoes.

It said that Jordan last month had imported other vegetables and fruit estimated at 3,663 tonnes.

Deputy proposes formation of special expatriates committee

AMMAN (Petra) — Parliament has been presented with a memorandum by Deputy Issa Reimouni demanding that the government set up a special ministerial committee to be charged with handling Jordanian expatriates' issues, especially those severely affected by the Gulf crisis.

The memorandum, according to Reimouni, will first be reviewed by the Lower House of Parliament before being referred to the government for action.

Reimouni also called for a special Parliament session to discuss the plight of the Jordanian expatriates with a view to extending them a helping hand under the present difficult circumstances.

He said the expatriates had offered valuable contributions towards Jordan's developments over the years.

Money transfers from Jordanian expatriates have been reduced especially after the Gulf

crisis when many of them have been forced to return home.

Reimouni's memorandum to Parliament suggested the establishment of an emergency fund to provide assistance to the expatriates who have lost their savings and their jobs in the Gulf states, and the creation of a national emergency centre for Jordanian expatriates in the main cities of Jordan.

Reimouni's memorandum appealed to the public and private sectors to extend a helping hand to the needy families among the expatriates by donating a day's wages every month for four consecutive months.

He also suggested that expatriates be exempted from customs duty on their furniture and be allowed to pay customs fees on their cars by installment and to have the original licence plates on their cars for as long as possible.

HOME NEWS IN BRIEF

King congratulates Yemen

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein Saturday sent a cable to Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh to congratulate him on the 27th anniversary of October 14 revolution. King Hussein wished Saleh continued good health and happiness and the Yemeni people further progress and prosperity.

Jordanian parliamentarians leave for Baghdad

AMMAN (Petra) — A Jordanian parliamentary delegation led by Lower House of Parliament Speaker Sulaiman Arar will leave for Baghdad Monday to attend the Arab parliamentarians meeting which was called for by the Iraqi National Assembly's speaker to discuss the situation in the occupied Arab lands after the killing of more than 30 Palestinians by Israelis in Al Aqsa Mosque.

WHAT'S GOING ON

EXHIBITIONS

- ★ Open studio and workshop for artist Samia Zura displaying paintings, sculptures and hand-painted fabrics. Location: off 2nd Circle, opposite Rosenthal (9:30-1:30 and 3:30-6:30).
- ★ Archaeological exhibition entitled "Al Lajjun — a Roman Frontier Fort" at the Department of Antiquities Registration and Research Centre, Jabal Amman.
- ★ Plastic art exhibition by four Palestinian artists depicting the suffering of the Palestinian people under Israeli occupation at the Jordan National Gallery for Fine Arts.
- ★ Exhibition entitled "Science in Profile" at the British Council.
- ★ Plastic art exhibition by Jordanian, Iraqi and other Arab artists at Alla Art Gallery, 1st Circle.
- ★ The Basal Humida exhibition of fine handicrafts, weavings and quilts at the Abu Jaber Estate, Yundeh.
- ★ Exhibition by Jordanian artist Omar Al Shayeb at the Royal Cultural Centre.
- ★ Exhibition of photos from the Goethe-Forest (between Taffah and Shabab) by Sigrid Neuber at the Goethe Institute — 5:00 p.m.

Amnesty organises week-long programme

AMMAN (J.T.) — The human rights organisation Amnesty International is organising a week-long programme in Jordan starting Tuesday Oct. 16, 1990 to focus on human rights violations in the occupied Arab territories and to orient the public on the role of Amnesty International in general and the events in the occupied Arab lands in particular.

The programme, which is being organised in cooperation with Al Hussein refugee camp youth club, entails the official opening of the club in Jabal Hussein to be followed by a candle-procession, the opening of an exhibition displaying Amnesty International's leaflet and books and publications on human rights.

Jordan Times

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New but lacking

THE consensus resolution adopted by the U.N. Security Council Friday is a compromise reached between the international community and the U.S. which had insisted on watering down the reaction of the council to the recent massacre of Palestinians at the hands of Israeli occupying forces. Still the resolution offers a new opening to the Palestinian question and is a dramatic departure from earlier resolutions on the Arab-Israeli conflict. The fact that the fact-finding mission is expected to report back to the council on measures to extend safety and protection to the Palestinian people under occupation is a remarkable step in the right direction although the language on the specific mandate of the mission was not incorporated in the resolution itself but rather in a statement read out by the president of the council. There has been fear that the fate of the mission would be similar to that of a 1987 fact-finding group sent by the U.N. secretary-general to the West Bank and Gaza Strip to investigate the situation there at that time. The findings of that group were filed never to be discussed or reviewed again. No wonder the majority of the members of the Security Council wanted stronger language about the new mandate and to have such a mission undertaken by the council itself rather than the secretary-general.

In the final analysis, what matters is the willingness of the world community to act on the findings whether they are a feature of the Security Council or the office of the secretary-general. But judging by the length of time the council took to come up with the watered down resolution, it is doubtful that some important members of the U.N. can or will be willing to deal effectively with the Palestinian problem at a later stage. Washington in particular has indicated that once Iraq withdraws from Kuwait, the Security Council would hasten to implement U.N. resolutions on the Palestinian question. However, the record of the U.S. during the past five days' deliberations in New York dampens all hopes that the Bush administration has the intentions and the resolve to deal with the Palestinian issue as effectively and urgently as the Gulf crisis. Washington's objections to the incorporation of sufficient language in the draft resolution, according to the Palestinians and the Islamic and Christian sites adequate U.N. protection, gives a clear signal that U.S. policies in the Near East remain biased, or vague at best. What adds insult to injury is the arm twisting that the Americans had also applied on their allies in a bid to make them deviate from earlier positions they had adopted.

In any case, having chosen a compromise resolution between right and wrong, the U.N. Security Council has put on the line its own credibility as an even-handed international body capable of taking principled decisions on matters that affect peace and security in the world. Whether the council has gambled and lost or gambled and won would largely depend on how it will deal with the findings of the secretary-general's mission.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

After the expressions of condemnation and shock by Arab capitals, what the Arab masses want to know now is whether Arab governments will take practical steps to stop further Israeli crimes like that which occurred at the Al Haram Al Sharif, said Al Ra'i Arabic daily Saturday. The paper said that the Arab League has scheduled a meeting on Wednesday, and every Arab and Muslim is waiting to see its outcome, and to find out whether the Arabs are really concerned about safeguarding their holy shrines. If the Arabs are seeking help from the U.N. Security Council to provide protection for holy places and guarantees against future Israeli atrocities, at least they themselves should take steps in that direction and protect Islam's third most sacred shrine, the paper noted. The Gulf crisis should by no means prevent the Arab League from taking steps with regard to Palestine and the holy places there, since the Al Haram Al Sharif and the Palestinian people are far more important than the Gulf issue and it is the responsibility of all Arabs and Muslims to rise above their current differences over the Gulf and other issues, and unite in their will and their action to fend off danger posed to their religion and their sacred places, the paper continued. Arabs and Muslims, said the paper, should realise that the problem at hand is not only the massacre of Palestinian worshippers, but rather Israel's attempt to re-build what the Jews call the temple in place of the Islamic holy shrine.

After the successful contact between Islamic groups in Jordan and Iran which really helped to smooth the way for Jordanian-Iranian relations in the future, the need is great now to copy the same formula in dealing with the Turkish people, says Salah Abdul Samad in his column Saturday. The Turkish people are being brainwashed against Iraq and the Iraqi people, and the Islamic groups of Jordan can do a lot to change this situation, the writer continues. He says that dealing with the Turkish people does not mean interfering in Turkey's internal affairs, but rather building good bridges of understanding with the people in Turkey so that the Islamic groups in Turkey can contribute positively towards resolving the Gulf crisis peacefully. Muslim groups have a duty to prevent any Muslim from launching aggression on another Muslim even if the aggression was inspired by the U.N. Security Council, the writer notes.

Al Dustour daily Saturday launched a bitter attack on the United States describing it as the enemy number one for Arabs and Muslims. The United States has a clear objective: to see Arab and Muslims in disarray, embroiled in disputes and lacking weapons to defend themselves in a united front against their common enemies. The paper noted the United States which secured six U.N. Security Council resolutions against Iraq following its takeover of Kuwait is placing obstacles in the path of a resolution condemning Israel's crimes and massacres against the Arab population of Palestine.

Sunday's Economic Pulse

The real victims of the Gulf crisis

ECONOMICALLY, Jordan may be the main victim of the Gulf crisis and the sanctions imposed by the U.N. Security Council against the Iraqi people. Jordan's loss in absolute terms may be little, but in relative terms, it represents over half of the national economy. Compensation is being withheld or intentionally delayed, through American pressure, to force the Jordanian people to join the American perception of the crisis. So far, Jordan has already received financial commitments from Germany and Japan totalling \$220 million, or 10 per cent of the estimated loss in one year.

But Jordan is not the only loser. Time will show that the major victims will be Europe

and Japan, which depend heavily on Middle Eastern oil that the United States would like to control.

When America started taxing its allies, rather than its people, to finance its military build-up against Iraq, it told them that they should bear their share of a military campaign that was meant to protect their oil supplies at cheap prices.

What is happening on the ground is the opposite. Europe and Japan were better off without American intervention. Saddam Hussein wanted to sell them all the oil they needed at \$21 a barrel. Thanks to the Americans, they now have to buy it at \$41 per barrel. Europe and Japan are losing

some \$840 million a day in unnecessary higher prices of oil, or \$300 billion a year. The world market is deprived of 4.6 million barrel a day from Iraq and Kuwait. Economic recession, therefore, is behind the door. It may develop into a world-wide depression if war erupted and oil supplies from the whole area were interrupted.

The irony is that America, which is responsible for causing these damages, is not apologetic. It still insists on pushing its allies to finance its military operation which they were better off without it.

Higher oil prices are not the only harm hitting the industrialised countries.

Share prices in the international stock exchanges lost be-

tween 18 to 32 per cent of their market capitalisation value. In Japan alone, the losses hit \$200 billion or 150 per cent of the total Third World debt. Adding losses sustained by the bourses of New York, London, Paris, Frankfurt, and others, the overall loss may exceed \$5 trillion, or four times the size of the world total debt which threatens world economic order and stability.

Against these astronomic losses, Iraq lost so far \$4.8 billion of oil exports. Japanese and West European losses of oil imports were 10.5 times that much. Their capital losses equal one thousand times the Iraqi oil losses in a full year.

Under these circumstances, one should not ask: for how long can Iraq stand the sanc-

tions? Rather the question is: Until when will the Western allies of America stand the blockade imposed by America against Iraq?

The real objective of the United States in the Gulf is not to reinstate the Sabah family or to secure its own oil supplies from Saudi Arabia. The real objective is to gain control of oil supplies to Japan and West Europe, who may, in five years time, become the new superpowers, alongside America following the demise of the Soviet Union. Those two potential superpowers may become more independent from their American leader if their oil needs were secured by an independent Arab Nation as their partner.

The French initiatives, the

German and Japanese reluctance to fall in line and go along with the American Gulf venture, are all signs that they are aware of the American designs, which are aimed at putting the future national security of Europe and Japan in American hands.

Arabs were always under the impression that Europe, as perceived by De Gaulle, is their natural partner in trade, technology and security. They were bewildered to see Europeans prodded into line with the American forces against the Arab Nation. With the collapse of the Soviet Union and its threat, it is only normal to expect Europe to act more independently to serve its own interest in the Arab World. It is not too late.

Bush's gamble in the Gulf

By Arthur Schlesinger Jr.

SADDAM Hussein's invasion of Kuwait required, and has received, a sharp international response. President Bush in the first weeks did a masterly job in organising that response — in assembling a coalition that included Arab states. In securing United Nations support for an economic embargo, in obtaining Soviet cooperation. He avoided the dangers of unilateral American action and gave new vitality to the principle of collective security.

Then the president went further. He made the U.S. the spearhead of the collective response. He dispatched 150,000 ground troops to Saudi Arabia. He is engaged, it would seem, in a great gamble. He is hoping that this prodigious display of military force on top of the political coalition and the economic embargo will cause Saddam to repent and retreat. But suppose that Saddam holds tight, digs in, refrains from military provocation and seeks ways of evading the embargo and of splitting the coalition. What then?

The dispatch of extensive ground forces to Saudi Arabia decreases our flexibility. Air power and naval power can enter and exit risky situations with comparative ease. But our commitment of ground forces is a major production. Their continued presence over a long period would cause objection and disruption in the Arab World. Their withdrawal in circumstances short of attainment of declared objectives would seem a political defeat.

Seize the opportunity
Some would send the troops against Saddam. They say that, unless we seize the opportunity today, five or 10 years from now Saddam, armed with chemical weapons and perhaps with nuclear bombs, will resume his drive

for supremacy. They say: Let us surgically destroy his chemical and nuclear weapons facilities while we can.

The way history has outwitted our certainties in the past years should make us wary about trying to foresee the future. Remember those prophets during the high noon of the cold war who were so certain of the consequences if the other side were not obliterated that they called for preventive war. Had they been able to persuade their governments to drop the bomb on Russia or on China or on the U.S. — but thank heavens, they never did.

"We are plainly not in the Gulf to defend democracy and human rights. Saudi Arabia has a barbaric regime where women taken in adultery are stoned to death and thieves have their hands cut off. The emir of Kuwait, whom we are currently pledged to restore to his throne, is unpopular throughout the Arab World. The defence of these medieval despotisms is surely not worth the life of a single American."

The reasoning employed in such cases, as Andrei Sakharov wrote in his memoirs, is "wrong in principle. We know too little about the laws of history. The future is unpredictable; we are not gods." It requires arrogance to claim sufficient foreknowledge of what Iraq will be doing five or 10 years from now to justify the

sacrifice of countless lives today. As for "surgical" strikes, of course the adjective has a consoling sound. It implies precision, speed, cleanliness and a healing result. But experience has amply shown that surgical strikes are an illusion. There is no such thing.

The Stealth bomber missed targets in Panama, even when spared the distraction of anti-aircraft fire (of which there would be plenty in Iraq). Bombing Iraq would kill thousands and stir abiding Arab hatred for America.

Nor, despite Gen. Dugan, can air power alone win a serious war. Air power can only prepare the way for the infantry. A follow-up invasion of Kuwait would be bloody and costly; an invasion of Iraq itself would be brutal. Our troops mostly lack combat experience, and all lack experience in desert wars. Their weapons are often so complicated that a good sandstorm would put them out of business. Our soldiers would confront hundreds of thousands of Iraqi troops who know the terrain, are used to the heat and glare of the desert and are hardened by years of cruel war.

If the gamble fails, do we really want to send our brave men and women into combat in the Persian Gulf? The answer to that question depends on the answer to another question: What are our vital interests in the Gulf? Is there a direct threat to American security that would justify the loss of a single American life?

This question has not yet been convincingly answered. Early on President Bush said that "our way of life, our own freedom" are at stake. But Saddam, loathsome as he is, is not another Hitler. His nation is hardly to be equated with Nazi Germany as a threat to American freedom.

President Bush had oil in mind. Certainly oil is a big factor in our response. Had Kuwait, specialised in producing frankincense and myrrh, one doubts that our indignation over the invasion

would have been so vigorous. And Arab oil is important to the economy. But is it of life-and-death importance?

"The oil shock," the Economist said recently, "looks likely to be smaller than those of the 1970s. And industrial economies are in far better shape to absorb it." This newspaper says: "Oil's economic threat is less than in '70s. ... The world will emerge from this crisis far less scarred than it did from those of the 1970s."

Even in the worst case, Saddam cannot withhold oil from the world market. Indeed, we are punishing him today by not buying oil he would like to sell. He must sell his oil in order to get foreign exchange to subsidise his project and pay his debts. If he puts the price up too high, he stimulates conservation and substitution. So let us not be panicked by vague fears about oil's disappearance, nor send Americans to die in bring it back to \$20 a barrel.

We are plainly not in the Gulf to defend democracy and human rights. Saudi Arabia has a barbaric regime where women taken in adultery are stoned to death and thieves have their hands cut off. The emir of Kuwait, whom we are currently pledged to restore to his throne, is unpopular throughout the Arab World. The defence of these medieval despotisms is surely not worth the life of a single American.

The strongest argument is that we must act in order, as President Bush says, to stop Iraq's "assault on the very essence of international order." We are there to build "a new world order" and to make the world safe from future aggression.

Certainly collective security is a noble ideal. But is an ideal to be collectively affirmed and defended. Is the U.S. to be the only guarantor of international order? We are far less threatened by Saddam than are the neighbour-

ing Arab states, or the countries of Europe and Asia. Why are we called on to do most of the fighting?

For a long time to come the Third World will be turbulent, chaotic and inflammable — a world of inconvertible poverty, exploding population, terrifying inequalities, deep-seated racial and tribal antagonisms, fierce religious fanaticisms. Iraq's invasion of Kuwait is an expression, neither the first nor the last, of the basic instability of the Third World. Are we Americans to step in and restore order every time over the next generation that one of these countries invades another?

We are not likely to do this very well. The fact is that we Americans don't know much about the Middle East. Our historical experience there has been limited and specialised: a few missionaries in the 19th century, a few oilmen in the 20th. We do not understand the cultures, speak the languages, appreciate the religions, comprehend the ways of life.

That is why we get so many things wrong. One day we embrace Saddam and the next we condemn him as the Great Satan. One day we condemn Hafez Assad of Syria and the next we embrace him. We have no idea of the traps ahead, the labyrinthine and treacherous politics, the shifting sands.

George Bush was everlastingly right to raise the standard of collective security against Iraqi aggression. But reminding the world of the ideal does not create an obligation to bring about immediate realisation. When President Roosevelt set forth the Four Freedoms, he did not intend that the U.S. fight to achieve those freedoms all at once everybody.

The U.S. simply cannot be the permanent guarantor of stability in a world of turbulence. Violence is epidemic in the Third World, and we cannot regard

every outbreak as a summons for the American fire brigade.

Failed intervention

Remember the great debate during the Vietnam war. The leaders of the realist school in foreign affairs — George Kennan, Walter Lippmann, Reinhold Niebuhr, Hans Morgenthau, William Fulbright — opposed American intervention because they did not think that the outcome of the Vietnam war would have much impact one way or the other on the vital interests of the U.S. History has shown that they were right. Our intervention failed — without perceptible damage to vital American interests. Let us not, as John Quincy Adams famously said, wander abroad in search of monsters to destroy.

How, if Mr. Bush's gamble fails, do we extricate ourselves without war? The best hope, I would guess, is that the Arabs themselves, with their skill in bargaining, might strike a deal. Such a deal might conceivably include Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait, but might also include concessions to Saddam with respect to drilling across borders and Iraqi access to the Gulf. It would certainly not guarantee restoration of the royal family but would fall short of our declared objectives.

But would it not be better to regard our objectives as bargaining chips, accept an Arab solution, pull our ground forces out of Saudi Arabia and declare victory? Better this than a savage and protracted war in which Americans are likely to believe long support.

Mr. Schlesinger is Albrit Schweitzer, professor of the humanities at the City of New York University and a winner of Pulitzer Prizes in history and biography. The article is reprinted from Oct. 2 issue of the Wall Street Journal.

Aoun ends rebellion

(Continued from page 1)

The number of military casualties was not immediately available.

"In light of the current combat and political conditions and to avoid bloodshed and further destruction, and to rescue what is left, I ask my chiefs of staff to take their orders henceforth from Gen. Emile Lahoud," Aoun said in a brief address to his 15,000 mostly Christian troops broadcast by his Lebanese radio station.

Lahoud commands Hrawi's 20,000 mostly Muslim army, which teamed up with thousands of Syrian troops and hundreds of Syrian tanks in the three-pronged ground assault.

The attack was spearheaded by two hours of Syrian air and artillery bombardment of Aoun's palace headquarters east of Beirut.

Hrawi said in a radio address to the country that "the military operation to end the destructive mutiny has been swiftly completed with the support of forces from sister Syria, to which we are grateful."

"Let us all rise above our hatreds and band together in a national unity that will definitely lead Lebanon to peace, security and stability," Hrawi said.

He cabled Syrian President Hafez Al Assad, thanking him for "promptly meeting Lebanon's request for Syrian military assistance to end the mutiny."

Prime Minister Saïm Al Hoss said the event heralded the "return of peace to Lebanon."

Defence Minister Albert Mansour ordered crossing between Beirut's western and eastern sec-

tors reopened Saturday "to reunify the capital as soon as the current operation to end Aoun's episode is completely over."

Soon after the order was blared by radio stations, Aoun's troops manning the mid-city museum crossing came out from foxholes and sandbag barricades, declaring allegiance to Lahoud.

"Long live Gen. Lahoud, commander of the unified Lebanese army," they chanted, uncapping Pepsi Cola bottles instead of champagne and hugging Lahoud's troops.

West Beirut, where Hrawi's government is based, erupted in jubilant gunfire over Aoun's surrender as his recorded comments were repeatedly broadcast.

Lebanon's ambassador to Jordan Ahmad Ibrahim said the end of a rebellion by Aoun marks "an important step on the road towards finding a lasting solution to Lebanon's problems serving the interests of Lebanon and the Lebanese people."

"Aoun's rebellion has always formed a major bloc in the face of the Taif resolutions which were approved by the Lebanese parliamentarians," Ibrahim was quoted as saying by the Jordan News Agency, Petra.

He said the parliamentarians who adopted the Taif plan form the Lebanese parliament, "which was elected 1972 in a democratic way, thus representing the will of all Lebanese people."

"Aoun always rejected calls by the legitimate authority to join the march of congruence and has rejected proposals by the Arab tripartite committee entrusted by Arab leaders to supervise the implementation of the Taif pact," Ibrahim said.

Saudi 'deals'

To the Editor

This is a true and exact copy of remarks of congressman James A. Traflet Jr. which have been officially entered into the congressional record. We thought it might be of some interest to your readers.

Buchelt International, (Construction firm), OIL, U.S.

DURING a time when we feel a certain closeness to the Saudis and may well sell them a \$6.74 billion arms package, I want to warn American businesses that doing business with certain Saudi Arabians can be destructive to the economic well-being of their companies.

In 1981, Buchelt International, Inc., a small construction company in my district, signed a contract with His Royal Highness Prince Mishaal Abdul Aziz, a senior member of the Saudi Arabian royal family, to design, construct, and arrange financing for a shopping centre in Riyadh. Now nine years later, long after work has been completed and the centre rented, a final settlement is yet to be made.

During construction of the mall, Prince Mishaal resorted to various unscrupulous practices to get Buchelt to acquiesce to demands that went beyond the limits of their contract agreement. The prince held Mr. Buchelt captive in his palace until he agreed to install 220 volt outlets not agreed to in the contract in each shop at Buchelt's expense. In addition, he held fifteen Buchelt workers captive and refused to release them unless Buchelt agreed to finance additional work done on the project due to delays caused by the prince's failure to meet contract obligations. While Buchelt was finishing work on the mall, the prince fraudulently called on a \$1.3 million Letter of Credit that Buchelt had put up to guarantee the project's completion and blocked removal of \$500,000 worth of Buchelt's equipment and records.

Although Prince Mishaal entered into the contract as a private citizen, he used his connections with the royal family to cheat Buchelt out of over 11 million dollars. The prince used his influence to change local building codes to suit his personal needs. He actually created documents which, in effect, were "new laws" to force Buchelt to do additional work on the project or face the threat of a jail sentence for failure to comply with Saudi laws. I have documentation in my possession that supports each of these claims made by Buchelt International.

Since completion of the mall in 1985, Buchelt has repeatedly requested that Prince Mishaal negotiate a compromise with him or submit the matter to arbitration as required by contract. Representatives from the Commerce Department have recently met with the prince's business manager to request that a final

LETTERS

settlement be worked out. The prince not only refused to negotiate, but, in a spirit of willful defiance, indicated that he would invite international legal proceedings because he can outspend Buchelt ten to one in legal fees. I can only conclude that the prince is unable to refute Buchelt's claims and, as a brother of King Faud, has set himself above the principle of contract sanctity.

While the prince has avoided settling his obligations, Buchelt International has been informed by the Saudi Arabia ex authorities that it owes substantial taxes and penalties on income it never received from the project. The firm believes that Prince Mishaal used his influence to raise the tax issue so to further delay settling the construction contract claims.

The prince has used such tactics with other businessmen who have dealt with him. I am aware of at least nine other firms, American and foreign, that this prince has cheated out of millions of dollars; among them is DRG Financial. In the next few weeks, I will be entering some of their stories in the RECORD.

It angers me that an arrogant prince who considers himself above the law is screwing American firms when the U.S. military is sparing no expense to preserve the Kingdom's independence and integrity. Prince Mishaal is well-known for his unscrupulous behaviour and his lack of business ethics.

A senior prince should not be able to block settlement of his contractual obligations, detain workers and prevent the export of a company's property. Congress should encourage the Saudi Arabian government to develop laws and regulations accepted as standard by the world trading community. Saudi Arabia has made great strides in economic and social development during the past 15 years. It should now address its inadequate legal system. It must provide safeguards to its local and foreign resident business communities if it expects to attract investors and technology.

Another allegation

To the Editor:

PLEASE allow me to quote the following paragraph from an interesting book called "Inside the Brotherhood" by Martin Short:

"The Bible says the temple was built mainly of wood and was a modest erection: just thirty feet wide and ninety feet long, no bigger than a modern-day synagogue or church-hall. If it needed an architect, he would not have been a stone-mason. Yet, when eighteenth-century Freemasons got hold of the story, they inflated Solomon's Temple into a gigantic stone palace resembling a tin-axe college campus."

Am I mistaken, if I say, that this is another allegation, with which the Israelis go on bluffing the world?

George Khoury
Amman.

New radicalism seen endangering democracy in Mideast

By M. S. Jaspersen
USIA

WASHINGTON — Robin Wright said she sees "cumulative trends" which "indicate the threat of a new wave of radicalism that will survive whatever happens over Iraq's invasion of Kuwait," in the keynote address to the annual Middle East Institute Conference October 12.

Wright, a Los Angeles Times correspondent, spoke on "New Realities in the Middle East."

That trend towards radicalism, she added, will "be a disruptive force far beyond the Gulf," and will "endanger the experiment with democracy in the region."

Wright, the author of "Sacred Rage: The Wrath of Militant Islam," and "In the Name of God," has reported from over 60 countries, most recently from Lebanon, and has covered nine wars as a foreign correspondent for the Sunday Times of London, CBS News, The Washington Post

and the Los Angeles Times. Saddam Hussein has now guaranteed a continuing crisis in the Middle East until the region resolves the Israeli-Palestinian dilemma, according to Wright.

Saddam Hussein "has successfully insured that the tension throughout the Middle East will not even begin to be diffused until the issue of a Palestinian homeland is at last addressed," Robin Wright said.

But the correspondent said that there is good news now, which may help resolve the many problems of the Middle East. She cited the unprecedented unity of United Nations action, and a new spirit of cooperation between the Soviet Union and the United States. "As a result, a whole new equation is being shaped" in Middle East relations.

But Wright said she is "concerned that in our short-term obsession over war, or no war, that too few of us are looking at the long-term effects."

"What happens after it's over is up for grabs. If diplomacy resolves the conflict — somehow, miraculously — and Baghdad agrees to withdraw from Kuwait, we will have Saddam Hussein in power. He still has his deadly arsenal. Iraq still has a million men under arms, and Baghdad is still a threat to the Gulf," she added.

"Under these circumstances," she said, "talk of a regional security alliance to keep Baghdad in check is an illusion. The world simply can't afford to pay for the kind of force now in the Gulf — or anything resembling it — on an indefinite basis."

Wright called post-crisis Iraq "a new reality," with or without Saddam. "There are no attractive alternatives," she said, adding she fears the country "is likely to be the focal point of major and potentially deeply unsettling developments in the region."

She also questioned the future of post-crisis Saudi Arabia and

said, "All the Gulf sheikdoms face some tough issues. The first is military. The crisis has shown that all that money can't buy might."

Furthermore, Wright said, she questioned the degree to which perceived Saudi "weakness" cost the house of Saud support at home in the long-term. Will dependence on American and Western armies eventually undermine — rather than strengthen — the Gulf monarchies? She asked, and answered, "I deeply fear that the answer is a resounding 'yes.'"

Wright said "petrodollars have not been able to buy lasting friends, unquestioned support at home, or regional security."

Wright said she is also concerned that the Arab League is "in disarray," and that the new tensions "are evident on a score of different fronts. She said destabilisation of Jordan "would be a disaster for the whole region."

and warned, "Division among moderate Arabs is a devastating trend — for them and for us."

"Instability and growing radical undercurrents in Amman would also endanger the very trend towards democracy the United States most hoped to encourage," Wright pointed out.

After Wright's keynote speech, four panelists assessed their concerns in the region.

Charles Doran of the Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies said the United States will have to accept "an extremely difficult and bitter trade-off" between either waiting out a terribly protracted time for the economic embargo to work, or even worse, war. That he said, would be a war fought not in the air, but on the ground, "a protracted one, which nobody wants."

Instead, Doran suggested, the United States may wish to negotiate a settlement, and be prepared to reverse the massive military

buildup in Saudi Arabia.

Panelist Dr. R. K. Ramazani, of the University of Virginia, questioned whether the GCC (Gulf Cooperation Council) can survive the crisis. He also suggested that the United States might wish to examine whether or not to bolster Iran, to achieve more balance in the region.

Ramazani also noted a growing anti-American sentiment in the region, and said many believe the presence of the western military troops in Saudi Arabia is "totally against" Muslim tenets.

Panelist Helmut Sonnenfeldt, guest scholar in foreign policy studies at the Brookings Institution and an expert on Soviet affairs and energy security, said that even though there is a spirit of cooperation between the United States and the Soviet Union, the two countries still have "open questions of collaboration" when it comes to the use of military force in the Middle East.

Sonnenfeldt pointed out that

without the new U.S.-U.S.S.R. relationship, the United States would not have been able to move so decisively against Saddam Hussein. Nor, he added, would the other Western countries have felt so free to cooperate in the effort against the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait.

But Sonnenfeldt reminded the conference participants that the Soviet Union is "profoundly opposed to the use of military force" in the region. They would probably cooperate with a U.N. decision, but it is doubtful they would participate militarily, he added.

The Brookings scholar also said the new demographics in Israel may have an effect on Soviet relations with the Arab World.

Sonnenfeldt cautioned that above all, the United States ought not relinquish the achievements gained with the passage of United Nations Security Council Resolution 601.

The words "unconditional and immediate," in the call for the withdrawal of Saddam Hussein's troops from Kuwait, he said, represent a tremendous achievement in cooperative consensus.

If the resolution is to have any effect, Sonnenfeldt added, "we must be very careful not to dilute" it.

A dissenting view of U.S. actions in the region was presented by Joe Stork of the Middle East Research and Information Project. He called the U.S. response to Saddam Hussein's occupation a "recipe for disaster," saying the Arab States ought to be left to resolve the crisis.

Stork said he believed the United States had used the United Nations as an "adjunct" to its actions, that its approach is "too military" and that it is pursuing a policy based on intervention, rather than one of promoting self-determination.

Jordan: Resolution a good start

(Continued from page 1)

standards in the U.S. handling of events in the area."

Aziz said Arabs should ask the Security Council for equality in implementing international law.

Iraq says any solution to the Gulf crisis, sparked by its Aug. 2 invasion of Kuwait, should be linked to a settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict.

The Security Council has passed eight resolutions against Iraq since the invasion.

"Hours after the Aug. 2 events, and without knowledge of what happened there (in Kuwait), the U.S. and its allies took one of the toughest resolutions in the history of the council," Aziz said.

"For five days after the massacre of the Arabs, the Palesti-

nians, in Al Quds, the U.S. was discussing, maneuvering, blocking the attempts to take one of the modest resolutions which was proposed by the non-aligned group. And then later on, after five days of maneuvering and pressure, flagrant pressure on the members of the council, we saw this last resolution which is a shame for the U.N. and for the Security Council and to those behind such a resolution," he said.

"At this time for the Arab people and for all honest people of the world to realise this fact and to deal with those powers who are dominating the Security Council in a proper manner and ask them strongly without any hesitation that they should implement international law fairly," he added.

Badran, U.N. envoy hold talks

(Continued from page 1)

achieved little in the way of concrete agreements Friday.

A U.S. official described the three-hour meeting in Washington as "cordial and positive" but added that no decision was made on the key question of how much money to give the states.

The United States and the European Commission have been at odds over that issue, with Washington arguing that Egypt, Turkey and Jordan need \$14 billion through the end of next year and Brussels saying \$9 billion should be enough.

U.S. officials refused to say whether Washington won any new pledges of aid at the meeting

or whether there was any discussion of expanding the number of countries eligible for help beyond the three states.

President George Bush announced the formation of the 16-nation task force — which includes Japan, West Germany and Saudi Arabia — at the annual meeting of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank late last month.

At that time, some European countries complained that they had been "bounced" into participating in the group, with little, if any consultation before hand.

In an apparent concession to such European concerns, the task force agreed to hold its next meeting in Rome sometime in the first half of November.

U.N. keeps Gulf-forged unity

(Continued from page 1)

and police.

He said that he did not know if the government would accept a visit by emissaries of the U.N. secretary general to investigate the deaths last Monday.

"I can't say if we will accept this mission. The cabinet will have to decide," Pazner said. He added the resolution would be discussed at a regular cabinet meeting Sunday.

Drawing fire from Jewish groups, the United States made the sharpest policy switch against Israel at the United Nations since it supported a resolution condemning Israel's 1982 invasion of Lebanon, although the United States did vote for a 1988 resolution criticising the expulsion of Palestinians.

Speaker after speaker called the council's action a victory for an unprecedented unity shown among the 15 members since a series of tough resolutions imposed economic sanctions and other actions against Iraq for its Aug. 2 invasion of Kuwait.

Two exceptions were the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) and Israel.

Nasser Al Kidwa of the PLO told the council he was "dissatisfied" with the resolution which he called insufficient.

It did not reflect what should have been the council's attitude towards the Palestinian people.

Israeli Ambassador Johanan Bein said the resolution failed to condemn the cause of the events in Jerusalem. He called Monday's incident an "unprovoked" attack by Arabs throwing stones on Jews.

Palestinian leaders were also quick to criticise the U.N. resolution approved Friday night — because it did not go far enough.

Radwan Abu Ayyash, a leading Palestinian nationalist in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip, said the resolution meant nothing without concrete action.

He called for international troops to protect Palestinians.

"Condemnations cannot rub out the blood of the innocent people which was spilled in the yard of the mosques," he told Reuters.

In Tunis, Palestinian groups expressed disappointment over the resolution, noting it condemned only the Israeli police and

Iraqi children

(Continued from page 1)

International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War, Inc. The group is meeting this week in the northern Italian city of Prato to discuss the Gulf crisis.

William Monning, the group's executive director, said only 1,400 local doctors would be available to treat the estimated 1,280,000 people who would be left wounded in Baghdad after the explosion of a nuclear bomb.

Another 770 doctors would be killed in the blast, he said.

The doctors group, which won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1985, has denounced the possibility of a nuclear explosion in the Gulf.

Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister Taha Yassin Ramadan arrived in Tripoli Saturday carrying a letter from President Saddam to Libyan leader Muammar Qadhafi.

The Libyan news agency, JANA, said Ramadan was received by

Libya's second-in-command Abdul Salam Jalloud. It did not say when the Iraqi official would meet with Qadhafi.

Ramadan said before leaving Baghdad that his visit was part of Iraq's effort to consolidate the Arab stand against the presence of U.S.-dominated foreign forces in the Gulf.

A Spanish legislator said Saturday in Baghdad President Saddam had agreed to let all 15 remaining Spanish nationals return home Monday, radio reports said.

Leftist deputy and attorney Cristina Almeida told reporters she and the four other members of an unofficial Spanish delegation met for two hours Saturday with the Iraqi leader at an undisclosed location.

During the meeting, Saddam told them all 15 Spaniards could leave with the Spanish delegation Monday, she said.

PLO disappointed over U.N.

(Continued from page 1)

George Bush on non-aligned members of the council.

The PCC's communiqué urged renewed efforts to convene an international conference aimed at resolving Middle East conflicts.

The Central Council, which has representatives from all the main PLO factions, condemned Gulf states which have deported Palestinians in response to the PLO position on Kuwait.

It named no countries but PLO officials say Qatar alone has expelled hundreds of Palestinians, many of them prominent businessmen, journalists and administrators.

It said some Arab states had imposed what it called a financial blockade on the organisation.

PLO officials say that since Aug. 2 they have been losing about \$55 million a month because of their differences over the Gulf crisis with Saudi Arabia and the other oil-producing Gulf states.

A formal PLO statement issued last Saturday said the Security Council resolution condemning Israel was inadequate and blamed Washington for obstructing the council's work.

"The PLO considers that it (the resolution) is not sufficient and does not include the integral elements which would be in keeping with the gravity of the current situation in the occupied areas,"

the statement said.

The PLO Executive Committee met Saturday to discuss the organisation's failure to obtain a resolution closer to the one it wanted.

The PLO's representative at U.N. headquarters in New York, Zehdi Terzi, has flown back to Tunis to explain what happened during the final stages of the five days of meetings and consultations, PLO officials said.

Only hours before the resolution was passed unanimously on Friday night, PLO officials were saying they would settle for nothing less than a mission of inquiry to the occupied territories from Security Council members.

They were counting on support from non-aligned members, and U.S. fears that a veto would damage the international consensus Washington has built up against Iraq.

But under the final version of the resolution, U.N. Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar will send the mission, an arrangement which the PLO believes will be less effective.

Jamil Hilal, the head of the PLO's information department in Tunis, said of the outcome, "it will be received with great disappointment in the PLO and popular anger in the occupied territories and elsewhere."

Egypt buries slain speaker

(Continued from page 1)

from Abu Nidal's organisation sent on sabotage missions.

And the current interior minister, Abdul Halim Musa, announced last week arrests of more than 35 alleged saboteurs and warned of possible attacks.

Officers said several civilians witnessed the attack and gave police some description of the gunmen, all said to be in their twenties.

The Cairo evening daily Al Massa said Saturday Mahjoub last week received a message from his Iraqi counterpart criticising him for supporting Mubarak's anti-Baghdad policy.

"Mahjoub did not know it was the beginning of the end," the state-controlled daily said.

Mubarak last week accused Baghdad of sending teams of agents to carry out attacks in Egypt after its firm opposition to Iraq's occupation of Kuwait. He said several Iraqis were caught and more arrests were expected.

He said Egypt had efficient intelligence agencies and warned Palestinians against collaborating with Iraqi agents to try and destabilise his government.

Several Arab leaders, including Libyan leader Muammar Qadhafi, have telephoned Mubarak to condemn the attack, as did U.S. President George Bush.

The Palestine Liberation Organisation's (PLO) Cairo envoy, Said Kamal, was among scores of foreign diplomats, senior Egyptian officials and opposition leaders at the funeral ceremony.

Mahjoub was graduated from Cairo University's law school in 1948 and obtained a doctorate degree in economy from the University of Paris five years later. He assumed several academic posts, including dean of the college of economy and political sciences. He became minister for presidential affairs in 1972 and deputy premier three years later.

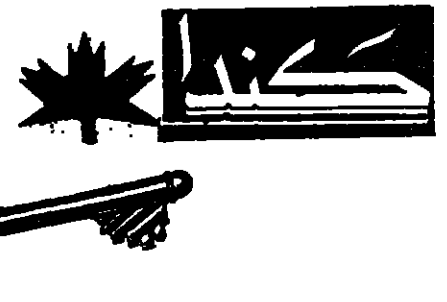
But he since taking the speakership in 1984, Mahjoub steered the People's Assembly, Egypt's unicameral legislature, just as the President Hosni Mubarak's government and National Democratic Party wanted.

As speaker, he was supposed to be neutral, a sort of umpire, between the party's overwhelming majority of more than 75 per cent of the chamber's 485 members and the opposition, which held about 100 seats.

However, as befitted a senior party leader, Mahjoub never forgot his party loyalty. His government bias was evident, sometimes brazen, in his conduct of debates.

He used his authority to ram through or shelve legislation in accordance with government wishes. This triggered frequent attacks by opposition parties who characterised him as a dictator who tried to cow or steamroller their deputies.

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JORDAN MARKET PLACE

Après le massacre de la mosquée d'Al-Aqsa

Le Conseil de Sécurité condamne la violence d'Israël

Il aura fallu cinq jours de tractations au sein du Conseil de Sécurité des Nations-Unies pour élaborer une résolution qui fasse l'unanimité parmi les pays membres et puisse être acceptée sans restriction. Adoptée dans la nuit de vendredi à samedi, la résolution 672 «condamne spécialement» les actes commis par l'armée israélienne lundi devant la mosquée d'Al-Aqsa et demande l'envoi d'une mission d'enquête sous la responsabilité du Secrétaire Général de l'ONU, qui devra présenter ses «conclusions» (et non ses «recommandations») comme le demandait l'Olp au Conseil de Sécurité avant la fin du mois. Ce texte compliqué et savamment dosé présente l'intérêt d'être la première condamnation d'Israël entérinée par les Etats-Unis depuis son invasion du Liban en 1962. Une sévérité qui, à n'en

pas douter, a été imposée par celle manifestée dans la crise du Golfe. Tout en refusant en effet d'établir une comparaison directe entre l'invasion du Koweït par l'Irak et le problème des territoires occupés par Israël en Palestine, les principaux chefs d'Etat et de gouvernement du monde ont admis cette semaine qu'il ne pouvait y avoir deux poids et deux mesures dans le traitement de ces deux problèmes.

Moyen-Orient simultanément, se trouve renforcé. Ce qui était apparu comme une tentative de diversion, prend beaucoup plus de poids après le massacre israélien. Dès lundi, le président François Mitterrand a appelé que depuis 1984 il demandait la réunion d'une conférence internationale sur le conflit israélo-arabe. Il ne s'agit pas d'une conférence visant à régler les deux problèmes ensemble, mais l'idée que l'urgence pourrait conduire à résoudre le problème palestinien avant de résoudre le problème koweïtien fait son chemin et n'est pas pour déplaire à Saddam Hussein. Enfin, le massacre de Jérusalem renforce le soutien palestinien au président irakien. Il suffit pour s'en convaincre de regarder les manifestations qui ont eu lieu toute cette semaine dans les rues d'Amman et dans les principales villes du royaume, où des portraits de Saddam Hussein ont été brandis avec les drapeaux noirs de deuil, les drapeaux palestiniens et jordaniens et les portraits de Yasser Arafat et du roi Hussein. Des milliers de manifestants ont ainsi défilé dans les rues et ont participé à des sit-in devant le bâtiment des Nations-Unies et l'ambassade des Etats-Unis pour réclamer l'application des résolutions de l'ONU concernant la Palestine. Une note a été remise par des manifestants à l'ambassade de France pour soutenir les propositions de paix du président Mitterrand, tandis que 250 personnes cessaient le travail sur le chantier des futurs locaux de l'ambassade américaine. Dans le même temps le gouvernement jordanien annonçait qu'il étudierait la question de distribuer des armes légères à l'armée populaire comme le demandent depuis le 2 août les leaders nationalistes arabes, islamistes et d'extrême gauche. La pression monte, même si ces manifestations pacifiques, souvent conduites par des enfants, se sont déroulées sans incidents. Tous les yeux sont braqués vers les Nations-Unies et l'Amérique, qui peuvent difficilement se permettre un faux pas.

Beaucoup d'autres arguments ont été utilisés par ailleurs, toute cette semaine, pour renforcer encore le lien entre le problème palestinien et le problème koweïtien au profit de Saddam Hussein. Le président irakien lui-même a annoncé qu'il possédait un nouveau missile d'une portée de plusieurs centaines de kilomètres, qu'il a baptisé «Hijra» (pierre) en hommage à la guerre des pierres menée depuis bientôt trois ans par les Palestiniens dans les territoires occupés. L'amalgame est fait, dans la presse notamment, entre les différents «ennemis des Arabes» qui s'imposent sur leur terre en Palestine et dans le Golfe, avec l'argument suprême des lieux saints bafoués par les Israéliens près de la mosquée Al-Aqsa et par les Américains en Arabie Saoudite.

Pour mettre fin à la suspicion et au dérapage, l'ONU a fait son choix dans une panoplie de mesures possibles, allant de la condamnation plus ou moins sévère d'Israël à l'annonce d'une conférence internationale (sur l'ensemble des problèmes du Moyen-Orient ou sur le seul conflit israélo-palestinien), en passant par l'envoi d'une mission d'enquête dans les territoires occupés et/ou l'envoi d'une force internationale pour la protection des Palestiniens. Une voie moyenne a été trouvée entre les solutions fortes demandées par l'Olp et les réticences américaines. Les actes commis par l'armée israélienne sont «condamnés spécifiquement», c'est à dire principalement mais sans exclure une part de responsabilité des Palestiniens. La mission d'enquête demandée par l'Olp est envoyée mais sous la responsabilité du Secrétaire Général et non sous celle du Conseil de Sécurité dont les pouvoirs sont plus grands et qu'Israël refuse de voir s'occuper de ses «problèmes intérieurs». Reste à savoir si cette réponse est suffisante pour clamer le jeu et quelles seront les conclusions de la mission d'enquête.

Il est clair en tout cas qu'aujourd'hui l'ONU a deux conflits à régler et non un seul. A défaut de les régler simultanément on ne peut pas négliger l'argument qui consiste à dire qu'une crise qui dure depuis 23 ans mériterait d'être réglée avant celle née il y a quelques semaines.

Jean-Marc Bordes

EN BREF

Chômage. Le chômage en Jordanie, qui frappe 18% de la population active du royaume, pourrait doubler en raison des répercussions de la crise du Golfe sur l'économie jordanienne. Alors que les responsables prévoient une augmentation de 4% du nombre des sans-emplois, les milieux économiques, plus pessimistes, estiment que le chômage pourrait atteindre 35% de la population active. Le ministre du travail, Gassim Obeidat, a indiqué qu'il préside actuellement une commission chargée par le gouvernement de se pencher sur le problème du chômage et de lui trouver une solution. Le rapport de cette commission, qui sera rendu à la fin du mois, pourrait inclure la création d'une caisse nationale destinée notamment à la restructuration de l'armée populaire, en vue d'y intégrer un grand nombre de chômeurs.

Egypte. Le président égyptien, Hosni Moubarak a prononcé mercredi la dissolution du parlement, conformément au souhait des Egyptiens exprimé jeudi dans un référendum. Ce référendum a été organisé à la suite d'un arrêt de la Haute Cour constitutionnelle qui, en mai dernier, a jugé anticonstitutionnelle la loi ayant permis l'élection de l'actuel parlement en 1987. La Cour a cependant pris soin de préciser que toutes les lois adoptées par l'assemblée contestée pendant son mandat et jusqu'à cet arrêt restaient valides. Les élections pour le nouveau parlement auront lieu le 29 octobre. Le jour même de la dissolution, le président du parlement égyptien, Rifaat Al-Mahgoub, a été tué par des coups de feu tirés par deux motocyclistes contre la voiture dans laquelle il circulait, sur la corniche du Nil. L'efficacité et la rapidité de l'assassinat font penser qu'il a été commis par des professionnels mais il n'a toujours pas été revendiqué.

Iran. Le président iranien Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani a réussi à consolider ses positions en arrivant en tête à Téhéran de l'élection lundi pour le renouvellement de l'importante Assemblée des experts. Ce résultat pourrait permettre à M. Rafsanjani, vice-président de l'assemblée sortante, d'étendre son pouvoir en devenant président de la nouvelle assemblée des experts, qui a la charge cruciale de désigner et d'éventuellement révoquer le Guide de la République, autorité suprême et pivot du système islamique.

Pertes. L'armée de l'air américaine a suspendu mercredi pour 24 heures ses vols d'entraînement dans le Golfe, pour examiner avec les pilotes la récente série d'accidents survenue en Arabie Saoudite. Un chasseur bombardier F-111 s'était écrasé mardi lors d'une mission d'entraînement en Arabie. Les deux pilotes avaient trouvé la mort dans l'accident, portant à 24 le nombre de militaires tués depuis le début de l'opération «Boudier du désert». Lundi, deux pilotes étaient morts dans l'accident d'un Phantom F-4 en Arabie, quelques heures seulement après la disparition de deux hélicoptères au dessus du Golfe d'Oman. Les huit militaires qui se trouvaient à bord de ces deux appareils sont présumés morts.

Imagine. Un demi-millier de fans du monde entier ont afflué mardi soir à Liverpool (nord-ouest de l'Angleterre), sur les lieux du Cavern Club, où les Beatles firent leurs débuts, pour célébrer le 50ème anniversaire de la naissance de John Lennon, assassiné à New York en décembre 1980. Simultanément, sa plus célèbre chanson, «Imagine», qui plaide pour un monde de paix, a été retransmise en direct depuis le palais des Nations Unies à New-York par les radios de 130 pays, reçues par un milliard d'auditeurs. «Quand l'idée de cette manifestation de dix minutes -sans sponsors- a germé, nous ne savions pas ce qui allait se passer en Irak et au Koweït. Et aujourd'hui il est tout à fait de circonstance que cette chanson soit diffusée de par le monde», a expliqué sa compagne, Yoko Ono, soulignant qu'«Imagine» serait aussi entendu dans le Golfe.

Nobel. Le prix Nobel de littérature 1990 a été décerné jeudi à Stockholm à l'écrivain mexicain Octavio Paz, poète et essayiste de langue espagnole. Dans «La mise au net» (Pasado en claro) de 1975, un vers pourrait servir de clé à son œuvre: «Voilà le monde, c'est l'espérance». La poésie d'Octavio Paz, née en 1914, et son œuvre d'essayiste sont les fruits d'une rencontre entre la culture précolombienne des Indiens, la culture espagnole des conquistadores et celle occidentale du modernisme.

Tampes. La Cour fédérale de justice allemande a émis un mandat d'arrêt contre huit espions présumés accusés de travailler pour l'ancien ministre est-allemand de la Stasi (services secrets et police politique) et le KGB soviétique. Les huit agents, tous employés dans l'industrie, avaient été interpellés mercredi après les aveux d'un haut fonctionnaire du service allemand de contre-espionnage qui s'est livré lundi à la justice et qui avait travaillé neuf ans pour la Stasi. Ces arrestations portent à dix le nombre des espions présumés écroués depuis la dissolution de la RDA dans la RFA.

Attentat. Le ministre de l'Intérieur de l'Allemagne unifiée a échappé de justesse à un attentat vendredi soir, au cours d'une réunion électorale. Un jeune toxicomane déséquilibré qui se trouvait dans l'assistance a sorti un revolver et a tiré en direction du Ministre. Ce dernier a été touché au visage et à la poitrine mais ses jours ne sont pas en danger. M. Wolfgang Schöbel est un des principaux artisans de l'unité allemande.

Révolution. Onze mois après le début des grands bouleversements à l'est qui ont entraîné la chute des régimes communistes, Achille Occhetto, le secrétaire général du Parti Communiste Italien, premier PC d'Occident, a franchi le pas en supprimant le vocable «communiste» pour ancrer sa formation dans «la gauche démocratique». Depuis mercredi soir, le PCI s'appelle désormais «le Parti Démocratique de Gauche» (PDS). Cette réforme pourrait déboucher à terme sur une scission. Une section du PCI de Milan a déjà annoncé que le 21 janvier prochain, date anniversaire de la fondation du PCI à Livourne, il y a 70 ans, elle allait recréer «un nouveau parti communiste» avec des militants de la gauche prolétarienne.

Djibouti. Quatre Djiboutiens, auteurs présumés de l'attentat qui a coûté la vie à un jeune Français et fait 17 blessés, le 27 septembre à Djibouti, ont été arrêtés et inculpés mercredi. La gendarmerie avait arrêté mardi plusieurs personnes se réclamant du «Mouvement de la jeunesse djiboutienne, auteur revendiqué de l'attentat du «Café de Paris» qui a touché en particulier des militaires français et leurs familles.

Précision. Le ministre français des Affaires étrangères Roland Dumas a indiqué mardi que la France ne participerait à aucune action militaire contre l'Irak, si celle-ci n'avait pas la «caution» du Conseil de Sécurité de l'ONU. M. Dumas a ainsi laissé clairement entendre que Paris ne suivrait pas les Etats-Unis si ceux-ci décidaient seuls d'attaquer Bagdad.

Cité. Vaux-en-Velin, une banlieue de Lyon (dans l'est de la France) a été le théâtre d'échauffourées entre forces de l'ordre et groupes de jeunes gens, après la mort d'un motard d'origine espagnole, tué dans un accident en croisant une voiture de police. Des jeunes, pour lesquels la mort de Thomas Claudio, 21 ans, serait due à une bavure, ont incendié des voitures, brisé des vitrines et érigé une barricade dans cette cité-dortoir de 50.000 habitants, en majorité immigrés. Selon la police, Thomas Claudio, polyomyléllite handicapé des jambes, se trouvait samedi sur une moto conduite par un ami. Les deux motards, qui n'étaient pas casqués, ont croisé une voiture de police et le pilote aurait paniqué et perdu le contrôle de l'engin. Thomas, cadet d'une famille de neuf enfants d'origine espagnole, a été projeté au sol et mortellement blessé.

d'autres Jordaniens, ont formé les «Comités pour la défense des libertés démocratiques en Jordanie».

Michel est parti pour Chypre en 1983, où il a commencé à publier «Al-Nachra» (Le Bulletin), une revue bimensuelle consacrée aux points de vue et aux activités des mouvements d'opposition dans le monde arabe. Il a publié, entre autres, des documents qui auraient gêné le régime syrien.

Suleiman Sweiss

LA SEMAINE... de Suleiman Sweiss

Le «terrorisme d'Etat» continue

Alors que les diplomates négocient des mots à New-York, le sang palestinien continue à couler à Jérusalem, à Ramallah, à Bethléhem et à Naplouse. D'ici deux ou trois semaines, «le monde» -surtout le monde civilisé- oubliera les crimes israéliens, tant dénoncés, comme il a oublié la scène barbare de soldats israéliens cassant les côtes d'un jeune Palestinien avec de gros cailloux il y a trois ans, que les chaînes de télévision ont diffusées à l'époque. Mais le peuple, en Palestine, en Jordanie et ailleurs, les familles des 32 Palestiniens tués et des centaines de blessés tombés sur l'esplanade de la mosquée Al-Aqsa lundi dernier sur ordre du gouvernement israélien... ces gens là, n'oublieront jamais. La haine s'accumule et la volonté de se venger grandit encore. Nous n'avons qu'à jeter un coup d'œil sur les réactions populaires, après le massacre, dans le monde arabe et particulièrement en Jordanie, en Irak et bien sûr -en Palestine. La direction unifiée de l'Intifada a annoncé que tout soldat israélien est un objectif à abattre; les affrontements se sont étendus en Israël même. A Amman, le parlement exige du gouvernement d'armer le peuple et d'intensifier les mesures défensives du pays.

Le massacre de lundi dernier est l'œuvre du gouvernement israélien lui-même et non l'acte d'un fou comme on l'a dit en mai dernier à propos de la tuerie des sept palestiniens à Rishon le Zion. Le «maire» de Jérusalem, Tedy Kollek et le quotidien israélien «Haarta» de mercredi dernier l'ont dit clairement: la responsabilité des événements de l'esplanade d'Al-Aqsa incombe au premier ministre Yitzhak Shamir.

Que signifie cette décision et quelles en sont les raisons? D'abord, la poursuite du terrorisme d'Etat signifie l'immobilisme de la politique israélienne vis-à-vis de la question centrale et brûlante au Proche-Orient, à savoir le droit à l'autodétermination du peuple palestinien. Le refus absolu par le gouvernement Shamir de tout compromis, de tout dialogue avec l'Olp (après plus de 1.000 jours d'Intifada) donne aux Palestiniens et aux Arabes tous les droits et toute la légitimité d'arracher leur liberté et leurs droits nationaux par la force. Celle-ci ne pourra pas rester éternellement le monopole des autorités de l'occupation israélienne. Que l'Occident, dont Israël est l'enfant gâté, ne blâme pas les peuples arabes s'ils vont trop loin dans l'extrémisme. Nous sommes bien décidés, cette fois-ci, à ne plus «nous retenir». Pour un Arabe, une seule goutte de sang palestinien vaut beaucoup plus qu'une centaine de barils de pétrole. Avoir de la patience pendant plus de vingt ans n'a fait qu'encourager le boucher à commettre de nouveaux crimes. Le gouvernement Shamir est le seul responsable de la recrudescence de la violence dans la région.

Pourquoi ce crime? Les responsables israéliens savent très bien que l'absorption des centaines de milliers d'immigrants juifs d'Union Soviétique ne pourra se faire tant que le peuple palestinien restera sur sa terre. D'où la politique israélienne de massacrer les Palestiniens et/ou de les obliger à quitter leur pays: c'est le fameux plan du «transfert».

La volonté délibérée des Israéliens d'augmenter encore la tension dans la région -en espérant qu'une guerre pourrait aboutir à la destruction de la force irakienne- l'amène à commettre cette provocation inutile.

Les événements de cette semaine démontrent une fois de plus l'urgence et la nécessité de résoudre, ensemble, les problèmes issus des occupations dans la région. En particulier, on ne peut pas dissocier le problème du Golfe du problème palestinien. Une analyse de Reuters, publiée il y a quelques jours vient confirmer ce fait. La tenue d'une conférence internationale sur le Proche-Orient est plus que jamais à l'ordre du jour. La France, l'Union Soviétique, la Chine, sont en mesure d'imposer cette option sur les Etats-Unis dans les circonstances actuelles.

En attendant, l'envoi de troupes de l'ONU dans les territoires occupés pour protéger la vie de la population palestinienne contre les atrocités des soldats israéliens est une priorité absolue. C'est cela le véritable défi de la légitimité internationale.

(*) Ce titre est celui d'un livre paru à Paris en 1977 et écrit par Israël Sabat, professeur à l'Université hébraïque et président de la «Ligue israélienne des droits du citoyen».

Plus de 5.000 Palestiniens se trouvaient lundi sur l'esplanade des mosquées à Jérusalem-est, devant la mosquée Al-Aqsa, considérée comme le troisième lieu saint de l'Islam, après La Mecque et Médine. Ils protestaient contre le projet d'un groupe de juifs de poser la première pierre d'un temple hébreu en contre-bas de cette esplanade, sur cette montagne qu'ils considèrent aussi comme un de leurs lieux saints. Alors que les hauts-parleurs de la mosquée appelaient à la défense de la sacralité du site, les Palestiniens commencèrent à jeter des pierres sur les manifestants juifs et ce fut le carnage: ouvrant le feu sur les Palestiniens, les soldats israéliens provoquèrent la mort de plus de 21 d'entre eux et en blessèrent plus de 150. Jamais depuis le début de l'occupation des territoires palestiniens, pareil massacre n'avait été commis par les Israéliens en un seul jour. En provoquant ainsi la saisine du Conseil de Sécurité des Nations-Unies par l'Olp en pleine crise du Golfe, Israël a fait ce que Saddam Hussein s'efforçait en vain de faire depuis des semaines: mettre en parallèle pour un temps, sinon définitivement, l'occupation de la Palestine et celle du Koweït.

La coïncidence des deux événements, le fait que la question du parallèle ait été longuement posée et débattue avant le massacre de Jérusalem, plaçaient les Nations-Unies au pied du mur. Il était impossible sous peine de flagrant injustice et de déridiculation de l'ONU de ne pas condamner Israël après les intentions de stricte défense du droit affichées dans la crise du Golfe. Certains commentateurs sont même allés jusqu'à dire qu'il était maintenant impossible de laisser la résolution 242 (réclamant le retrait d'Israël des territoires occupés) à l'état de lettre morte alors même qu'on applique à la lettre les résolutions contre l'Irak et que des crimes commis dans les territoires occupés.

Il est clair en tout cas que les Etats-Unis ne peuvent pas appliquer raisonnablement leur veto contre les projets de résolutions condamnant Israël comme ils l'ont fait jusqu'ici.

Une sorte de rapport de réciprocité s'est donc instauré entre le conflit du Golfe et celui de Palestine, plaçant l'ONU face à ses responsabilités: ou bien elle prend des sanctions contre Israël et celles qu'elle a prises contre l'Irak sont justifiées; ou bien elle ne les prend pas et sa sévérité contre l'Irak perd toute justification valable. Il est vrai que nous n'en sommes pas à l'étape des sanctions, mais il est déjà important qu'Israël ait été condamné et qu'une mission des Nations Unies soit envoyée à Jérusalem. Dans tous les cas, cette nouvelle réciprocité donne de l'air à Saddam Hussein. D'abord parce que le projecteur braqué depuis des semaines sur lui seul a trouvé un autre objet. L'indignation internationale se répartit maintenant sur deux foyers au lieu de se concentrer sur un seul. De plus, le projet de conférence internationale, lancé par Saddam Hussein le 12 août et visant à régler l'ensemble des occupations du

Liban La rédition surprise du général Aoun

Le général libanais Michel Aoun, opposant irréductible au président Elias Hraoui et aux accords de Taëf, sur la base desquels se dernier a été élu, a rendu les armes samedi matin et a demandé à ses soldats de rallier les troupes du gouvernement légitime.

Le général chrétien rebelle, qui contrôlait le palais présidentiel de Baabda et la région nord-est de Beyrouth depuis 750 jours, a pris cette décision après que les troupes syriennes eurent renforcé leur dispositif autour de son fief, à la demande du président Hraoui.

Jendi soir, des unités de blindés et d'infanterie syriennes s'étaient en effet massées au sud et à l'est du palais de Baabda et avaient commencé vendredi à bombarder massivement la zone du Metn contrôlée par Michel Aoun, faisant cinq morts et une soixantaine de blessés. Le général chrétien avait lui-même échappé de justesse à un attentat vendredi, un individu porteur d'un passeport australien ayant tiré sur lui avec un revolver et blessé un de ses gardes du corps.

Le président libanais a fait appel à l'aide syrienne après avoir constaté l'échec du blocus sur l'alimentation, les carburants et les médicaments, appliqué depuis le 28 septembre sur la région de Metn.

M. Hraoui a remercié la Syrie pour son aide, tandis que Michel Aoun trouvait refuge à l'ambassade de France à Beyrouth, proche du palais de Baabda et porte de sortie vers un éventuel exil en Europe.

Selon les analystes, la rédition du général rebelle est perçue comme une nouvelle chance de paix pour le Liban ou comme une soumission volontaire du gouvernement légal au pouvoir syrien qui n'annoncerait rien de bon pour l'avenir du pays...

Vous écrivez?

Si la plume vous démange, que vous écrivez en français... «Le Jourdain» vous ouvre ses deux pages hebdomadaires. Vos idées de sujets, locaux et régionaux, comme vos suggestions y sont les bienvenues.

Jean-Marc Bordes, French section, Jordan Times.
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Michel Al-Nimry

L'idéal immortel d'un journaliste assassiné

Mercredi dernier, un grand meeting s'est tenu à la Maison des Syndicats d'Amman pour commémorer le cinquième anniversaire de la disparition du journaliste jordanien Michel Al-Nimry, assassiné à Athènes le 18 septembre 1985 par les agents de renseignement d'un pays voisin, alors qu'il sortait de son bureau. Tour à tour, des représentants de l'Association des journalistes jordaniens, de celle des journalistes palestiniens, de la coalition des partis de gauche, l'ambassadeur de l'Eilat de Palestine, des amis du défunt et de sa famille ont pris la parole pour énumérer les qualités et les activités du «militant, journaliste et héros» qu'était Michel, mort pour la démocratie et la liberté d'expression.

Né à Samad, près d'Irbid, en 1948, Michel a vécu son enfance à Mafraq. Après la guerre de 1967, il a adhéré à la Résistance palestinienne. Parti à l'étranger fin 1968 pour poursuivre ses études supérieures, il s'est engagé assez vite en Italie, au sein du mouvement étudiant jordanien. Il a été élu en 1971 membre du Comité exécutif de l'Union générale des étudiants jordaniens et rédacteur en chef de la revue que l'Union publiait.

En 1974, Michel rentre en Jordanie. Il travaille pendant deux ans pour deux quotidiens: «Al-Sabah» (Le Matin) et «Al-Akhbar» (Les Nouvelles). Il contribue à la fondation de l'Association des Ecrivains Jordaniens et devient membre de son comité directeur.

Fin 1975, il quitte de

nouveau la Jordanie pour s'installer au Liban. Durant les années qui vont suivre, le journaliste occupera une grande partie de son temps. Secrétaire de rédaction de l'hebdomadaire «Al-Hurriyah», il travaille également pour le quotidien «Al-Safir». Il dirige l'hebdomadaire «Al-Mawkiif Al-Arabi».

Il écrit de nombreux articles et études qui paraissent dans d'autres publications. «Michel s'intéressait beaucoup à la réussite professionnelle» a dit mercredi dernier Saleh Kalab, un de ses amis. Très vite en effet, Michel, le jeune journaliste, s'est fait un nom dans la presse arabe.

Mais c'est la question de la démocratie et des droits de l'Homme qui lui tenait le plus à cœur, dès la fin des années 1970. En juin 1979, l'auteur de ces lignes, avec Michel et

Les funérailles de Michel se sont transformées, en 1985, en une manifestation patriotique. Cinq ans plus tard, les Jordaniens ont évoqué la mémoire de Michel, dans une atmosphère d'ouverture démocratique dont il rêvait, à Amman même. Ses amis auraient souhaité qu'il soit parmi eux pour qu'il puisse constater par lui-même le début de la victoire de son idéal en Jordanie: la démocratie.

Sans Blague!

Les procès du Moyen-Orient (fin)

L'huissier sortit dans la salle des pas perdus, répétant de sa voix assourdissante: «Affaire Koweït-Irak».

Koweït, petit homme ventru, avait les yeux globuleux de quelqu'un qui ne dédaignait pas la bouteille. Tous ses doigts, à part les pouces, étaient piqués de grosses bagues ornées de pierres fabuleuses. Il s'installa au banc des plaignants.

Il faut rappeler que Koweït était fils d'Arabie. Ayant juré éternelle obéissance aux ordres d'Albion, il avait obtenu que les enfants de celle-ci l'aident à usurper une petite (mais combien riche) partie du terrain d'Irak. Par la suite, voyant l'étoile d'Albion décliner et celle de l'oncle Sam monter, il s'empressa, avec la bénédiction d'Albion (devenue entre temps petite amie attirée de Sam), de jurer éternelle obéissance à l'oncle Sam, qui, en échange de la majeure partie des récoltes du terrain usurpé, accepta de le compter parmi ses protégés.

Me Bush, fils brillant qu'on peu puritain de l'oncle Sam, rejoignant Koweït au banc

des plaignants. Malgré ses occupations astreignantes (il avait, dit-on, beaucoup de Golfe à pratiquer), il avait consenti à représenter Koweït dans cette affaire.

Irak et son avocat Aziz ne se présentèrent pas. L'oncle Sam, sur le terrain duquel se trouvait le tribunal onusien, leur avait en effet interdit l'accès de ses terres. Le juge, se rendant compte de l'absence de l'accusé, était sur le point d'ajourner le procès. Les tiraillements des fils qui tenaient l'oncle Sam et Albion firent qu'il se ravisa et demanda si un avocat présent dans la salle ne voulait pas se porter volontaire pour défendre Irak. «Simon, dit-il, je procéderai par contumace».

Me Sharif, fils de Jordanie (sœur affectueuse d'Irak), se présenta et prit place au banc des accusés. C'était un avocat renommé, avec une longue et brillante carrière.

Après avoir ouvert la séance, le juge demanda à Me Bush de présenter sa plainte. Bush déclara: «Mon client possède, depuis fort longtemps, un tout petit

lopin de terre. Subitement, Irak (qui possède un grand terrain voisin), accompagné de quelques-uns de ses enfants, a envahi ce petit terrain et annoncé qu'il l'annexait! Le plus grave est qu'Irak agit de la sorte sans aucune autorisation de l'oncle Sam!».

«C'est scandaleux!», rugit d'une voix formidable toute la salle (ou presque) à l'unisson, ce qui fit sursauter Marianne qui rêvait, et Chine qui dormait. Même l'Ours, pourtant attablé au bistro d'en face, fut tiré de ses méditations. Il revint précipitamment dans la salle, regagna son fauteuil et reprit le fil qu'il avait laissé avant le début de la séance à l'oncle Sam.

«Je ne vous le fais pas dire!», continua Me Bush, content de son effet. Où irions-nous si chaque propriétaire de terrain pouvait se permettre de s'approprier les terres de ses voisins sans aucune autorisation préalable des Grands! Dans ce procès, Irak devait servir d'exemple! Non seulement il devra restituer tout de suite le terrain de mon client, mais il devra aussi remettre à cette Cour tous les bâtons et les fromages que possèdent ses enfants et qui effraient tant Arabie, Israël et d'autres! De plus, Irak devra venir se mettre à genoux dans cette Cour-même et attendre, sans broncher, que tous les propriétaires de terrain du globe lui crachent tour à tour à la figure...».

Le discours de Me Bush reçut une longue et bruyante ovation de toute l'assistance (ou presque). Il faut rappeler que la plupart des enfants de Koweït, n'aimant pas travailler sur le terrain qu'avait usurpé leur papa, avaient choisi de se la couler douce sur les terrains des autres. Pour exploiter «sa» terre, Koweït avait donc dû faire venir, comme serfs, de nombreux travailleurs infortunés (des enfants de Palestine, entre autres). Le jour où les enfants d'Irak se massèrent sur la frontière du terrain usurpé, Koweït, ne trouvant autour de lui que deux ou trois de ses enfants, préféra s'enfuir subrepticement avec eux vers le terrain de sa mère, Arabie, sans même échanger un seul coup de bâton avec les enfants d'Irak.

Lorsque la salle se calma, le juge demanda à Me Sharif de répondre. «Je déclare devant l'honorable Cour, après avoir suivi le procès Palestine-Israël, que ce n'est pas une promesse vague et douteuse, remontant à la nuit des temps, que possède Irak concernant le terrain contesté, mais bien des documents authentiques de propriété, dont les derniers en date ne remontent qu'à quelques dizaines d'années. La Cour devrait reconnaître immédiatement la légitimité...».

Oncle Sam avait tiré fort sur son fil. Les quatre autres Grands, à l'affût, l'imitérent immédiatement. Le pauvre Javier se pressa d'intervenir. «Avez-vous les documents originaux de propriété, Me Sharif?», coupa-t-il. «Non votre Honneur, j'en ai des copies. Les documents originaux sont avec Irak, qui comme vous le savez sans doute, a été empêché d'assister au procès.»

«Il n'a pas de documents!», se mirent à scander les cinq Grands (bien sûr rejoints par presque toute la salle) tout en tirant à l'unisson sur leurs fils. Lorsque le chahut finit par s'arrêter, Me Sharif, conscient d'avoir perdu son premier argument, (combien injustement!) continua: «Par ailleurs, les lois universelles de parcellement interdisent qu'un terrain dépourvu d'eau douce soit constitué en lopin indépendant! Un tel terrain doit être rattaché à l'un ou l'autre des terrains voisins, donc, dans notre cas, aux terrains d'Irak ou d'Arabie. Mais comme seul Irak se considère des droits sur le terrain contesté, celui-ci doit absolument lui revenir!».

Un silence pesant tomba sur la salle. Les Grands se regardaient avec stupeur, tirant nerveusement sur leurs fils de temps à autre. Me Bush, se ressaisissant, finit par dire: «Me Sharif parle sans doute de ces vieilles lois déshéritées appelées lois géographiques, promulguées avant l'invention de l'eau minérale, du Coca-Cola et de l'eau de toilette. Je dois rappeler à mon respectable collègue que lesdites lois ont été abrogées par les lois du colonialisme et de l'impérialisme...».

LA Bush se mordit les lèvres se rendant compte qu'il venait de commettre une grave impardonnable: les lois onusiennes réprimaient en effet durement (théoriquement du moins) trois crimes: le colonialisme, l'impérialisme et le racisme. Il commença à faire des signaux désespérés à son père, l'oncle Sam. Celui-ci ne tarda pas à réagir. Il fit actionner la batterie de fil qu'il commandait et se mit, rejoint par les autres Grands et par presque toute la salle, à scander: «Verdict!».

Le pauvre Javier ne savait plus où donner de la tête. Lorsque le silence revint, après quelques minutes (qui parurent des siècles à l'infortuné juge), il s'empressa d'annoncer: «Voici mon verdict! Irak, en envahissant un terrain que les Grands affirment ne plus lui appartenir, a enfreint le droit sacré de propriété. Tous les moyens pour l'en déloger sont bons: force, embargo, blocus, détournement des eaux de ses ruisseaux, détournement des nuages et des oiseaux se dirigeant vers ses terres...» Puis il s'empressa de lever la séance pour échapper, enfin, aux fils meurtriers des Grands.

Sabri Farah

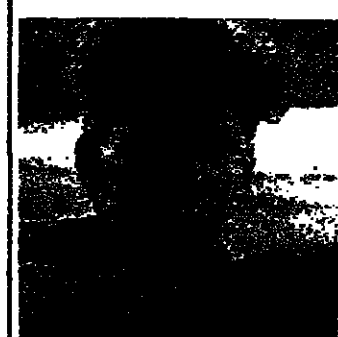
Cinéma français 1989

Le Centre Culturel Français entame à la fin de cette semaine la deuxième partie de son festival sur le cinéma français 1989. Trois films, sortis dans les salles d'été, ont été présentés dans la grande salle du Centre Culturel Royal, samedi 20, dimanche 21 et lundi 23 octobre à 20h15. Voici un résumé de ces trois films:

ROMUALD ET JULIETTE, de Coline Serreau, avec Daniel Auteuil. Romuald est le PDG de l'entreprise de yaourts BLAN-LAIT. Un jour il tombe amoureux de sa femme, mais il l'ignore: son bras droit. Ce qui provoque la colère des autres directeurs. L'un d'eux conseille à Paulin, envoyé dans une succursale lyonnaise pour augmenter la production, de stopper les contrôles sanitaires. Des Lyonnais sont empoisonnés et Romuald en est rendu responsable. Devenu un homme traqué, il se réfugie chez Juliette, la femme de ménage attitrée de l'entreprise. Juliette accepte d'aider Romuald à faire échouer la vérité. Petit à petit, une complicité se noue entre le PDG déchu, Juliette et ses cinq enfants.

APRÈS LA GUERRE, de Jean-Loup Hubert, avec Richard Bohringer. L'été 1944, en Haute-Provence. Antoine et Julien, élevés par leur oncle, fuient à travers la campagne. Ils rencontrent un soldat allemand d'origine alsacienne, parlant français, paralysé par une sciatique. Ils comprennent qu'il est déserteur et sympathisent avec lui. Las de la guerre, écorché, solitaire, c'est un pacifiste sous ses apparences bourrues. Il arbitre les incessantes querelles des deux gosses au sujet de l'identité inconnue du père du cadet. Tous trois arrivent dans un village désert.

LA VIE EST UN LONG FLEUVE TRANQUILLE, Comédie d'Edienne Chastler, avec Benoit Magimel et Valérie Lalande. Dans le nord de la France, vivent deux familles totalement différentes. Les Le Quennoy sont des bourgeois catholiques pratiquants tandis que les Grosjean sont des pauvres vivant de combes et de fanche. Joëlle, infirmière, va provoquer la rencontre de ces deux mondes. Un soir de Noël, il y a douze ans, elle a échangé les nouveaux nés des deux familles. Momo, qui vit chez les Grosjean est un Le Quennoy et Bernadette est une Grosjean...



A L'AFFICHE

F O C U S

Théâtre et politique

L'étrange histoire de Zawad, fils d'Awad

Après un grand succès au Théâtre Mashini à Amman, Zawad walad Awad, de Mighied al-Zuwaidi, pièce en arabe qui traite des élections de novembre 1989, part cette semaine en tournée nationale. Première étape de la troupe: Madaba, où elle jouera les 18, 19 et 20 octobre. Mohammed Dmour, le réalisateur qui participa dès le début à l'évolution de l'œuvre, nous a confié ses impressions.

Le Jourdain: Qu'est-ce qui vous a amené à monter une pièce sur les élections?
Mohammed Dmour: Nous voulions évoquer un certain type de candidat que nous avons observé à cette occasion, Mighied al-Mafraq (au nord du pays) et moi à Kerak, au sud. Le type à la mentalité pedzouille, qui n'a que son intérêt personnel à cœur. En le mettant en scène, notre but est de dire aux électeurs qui confondent encore naïvement une candidature à un poste parlementaire avec une préoccupation sincère pour l'intérêt public qu'il faut juger toutes les candidatures avec beaucoup de circonspection.

LJ: Ces postulants, comment les avez-vous représentés?
MD: Il y en a deux: Zawad et son rival, Irfan. Ni l'un ni l'autre ne pose sa candidature pour un motif politique légitime. Zawad (Mohammed al-Zawad) est un homme simple mais riche, amené à la politique par un charlatan, Hamdan (Adnan al-Shamali) qui lui a bourré la tête d'idées de gloire et qui veut l'exploiter pour s'enrichir. Irfan, lui, (Abdallah Suwayat) est un opposant hésitant, agrippé par Farhan (Youssef Youssef), un homme qui veut nuire à Zawad en raison d'une querelle personnelle. Ce sont donc deux candidatures nées de procédés mesquins, qui n'apportent aux élections que du fil à retordre, prétextant des plateformes électorales fictives et aboutissant à des manigances, au détriment de l'intérêt public. La pièce veut démasquer tous ces aspects.

LJ: Il y a un troisième candidat qui ne tient pas pendant la scène de la conférence de presse, mais qui, en même temps, place une affiche électorale. Quel rôle joue-t-il?

MD: C'est l'homme conservateur aux bonnes intentions. Lui aussi représente un aspect de notre critique. Même s'il ne dit mot, il s'annonce clairement par le slogan qu'il a inscrit sur son affiche: «Al-thibhen fil ataqah», qui, en arabe, signifie «La sagesse vient avec l'âge». Malheureusement, l'ancienneté dans notre pays continue à primer sur la compétence, et ce cri de guerre a été une devise prépondérante durant la campagne électorale.



Vers la milieu de la pièce, une journaliste sans jupon interroge Zawad, sous l'œil du charlatan qui lui sert de directeur de campagne.

LJ: On a l'impression, en voyant cette pièce, que les Jordaniens n'ont rien compris au processus de la démocratie et qu'ils sont prisonniers de mœurs rustiques et tribales. Voulez-vous en dire autant?

MD: C'est vrai qu'on rencontre dans la pièce des figures comme celle du vieil homme, le cousin de Zawad, qui n'a aucune idée de ce que la démocratie représente. C'est le type dont l'horizon politique est défini par sa loyauté à sa tribu et à sa famille, et dont, en cas d'élections, on peut être sûr qu'il donnera son vote au candidat qui représente ces valeurs, quel que soit son programme. Néanmoins, ce n'est pas son vote qui est décisif, sans quoi Zawad aurait obtenu un siège parlementaire. Le vrai vainqueur est l'autre cousin de Zawad, l'arabesque d'on parie tout le temps mais qu'on ne voit jamais, Sweilam Awad. On dit de lui beaucoup de bonnes choses: qu'il est honnête, éduqué, travaille. Dans les urnes, il recueille le plus grand nombre de voix, ce qui montre que le peuple, dans son ensemble, ne s'est pas laissé duper.

LJ: Mais ce peuple éclairé dont vous parlez, on ne le voit jamais. Pourquoi est-il éteint?

MD: Parce que nous voulions ne tirer la pièce que de l'expérience que nous avons faite et qui se limitait aux quartiers de grandes villes comme Mafraq et Kerak, où les traditions villageoises et tribales prévalent encore et où des types comme Zawad et Irfan, ainsi que leurs directeurs de campagne, Hamdan et Farhan, peuvent trouver un terrain fécond pour leurs jeux. Pour la même raison, l'évocation de l'expérience électorale de la femme se limite à celle de Fatha (Margo Aslan), la femme de Zawad. Beaucoup plus maline que lui, elle accepte tout de même tous ses caprices. Elle ne joue aucun rôle révolutionnaire.

LJ: Le fait que cette pièce soit une co-production du Ministère de la Culture et de l'Association des Artistes Jordaniens semble indiquer que Zawad walad Awad a reçu une bénédiction officielle. Est-ce que cela signifie que vous n'avez pas eu d'ennuis avec la censure?
MD: Il nous ont demandé deux fois des changements. Lesquels? Disons qu'ils ont encouragé certains courants et nous ont priés d'en éliminer certains autres. Mais l'important n'est pas de parler de la censure officielle mais d'une auto-censure dont les médias sont coupables. Dans la pièce, on constatera que la journaliste (Rania Fahed) qui s'entretient avec les candidats est aussi risible que Zawad, Irfan et les membres de leur coterie. Bien qu'elle ait le droit de poser des questions et que ce soit son devoir à l'égard du public, elle ne fait que demander des choses superficielles. Il lui est évident que Zawad et Irfan ne sont pas des postulants sérieux; cependant, elle se contente des réponses qu'ils lui donnent, sans faire aucun effort pour percer leurs balivernes.

LJ: Pourquoi la troupe a-t-elle choisi le mode de la farce pour présenter sa critique?

MD: Vous vous trompez d'adresse si vous pensez qu'il s'agit d'une farce. Notre but n'est pas de faire rire les gens. Nous voulons les rendre conscients de la campagne que nous avons vécue. Je vous assure que le regard que porte la pièce sur les réalités politiques dans certains de ces quartiers, même s'il est un peu exagéré, frise la vérité. Le processus qui s'est déployé devant nos yeux touchait à la caricature. Forcément, on en rit, car les choses tristes, poussées à l'extrême, sont souvent très drôles.

Propos recueillis par Sami Kamal

CINEMA

TELEVISION

DIMANCHE

"Le fantôme de la liberté"

Film de Luis Buñuel, avec Julien Berthaut, sorti en 1974. Ce film raconte les fantasmes d'un visionnaire, qui refuse la logique des choses.

Collaboration CCF - Fondation Shamma, en «Cultural and Scientific Center of the Jordanian Investment Bank, Shammal. Le dimanche 14 octobre à 18h30.

"La symphonie fantastique"

Film de Christian Jacque, avec Jean-Louis Barrault et Bernard Blier, sorti en 1942. Ce film s'inscrit dans le cycle musical offert ce mois-ci par le Centre culturel français. Il évoque l'œuvre du compositeur romantique Hector Berlioz.

Centre Culturel Français, le lundi 15 octobre à 20h.

"Romuald et Juliette"

Le premier des trois films proposés ce mois-ci par le CCF dans le cadre du festival du cinéma français 1989. Ce film de Coline Serreau (à qui on doit le célèbre «Trois hommes et un couffin»), avec Daniel Auteuil, raconte l'histoire d'amour et d'amitié entre un homme traqué par la police et une antillaise mère de cinq enfants.

Centre Culturel Royal, le samedi 20 octobre, à 20h15.

"The good earth"

Ce film sorti en 1931 raconte la lutte d'un paysan chinois qui perd sa femme au moment où il parvient à acquiescer de la terre et à s'établir. Il s'inspire du roman de Pearl Buck, fille de missionnaires en Chine, qui regut en 1938 le prix Nobel de littérature, pour ses livres sur l'Empire du milieu.

Centre culturel, le dimanche 14 octobre à 19h et le jeudi 18 à 18h30, précédé ce jour-là d'un documentaire de 30 minutes sur la vie de Pearl Buck.

"The Wizard of Oz"

Film pour les enfants inspiré du célèbre conte de Frank L. Baum. Centre américain, le mercredi 17 octobre à 17h.

"Caspar David Friedrich"

Ce film de Peter Schamoni, sorti en 1986, raconte la vie du célèbre peintre romantique allemand Friedrich (1774-1840) et plonge son regard dans ses œuvres pour retrouver ses sources d'inspiration. Institut Goethe, le samedi 20 octobre à 20h. Film en allemand, sous-titré en anglais.

EXPOSITIONS

Architecture. Présentation photographique d'une sélection d'ouvrages (habitations, universités, villages de vacances, ponts, etc...) construits récemment aux quatre coins du monde par des architectes français.

Centre Culturel Français, jusqu'à la fin du mois.

JEUX

LE SAVIEZ-VOUS ?

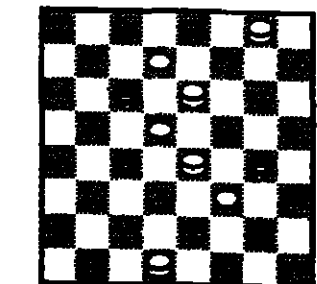
EXPLORATION. Un ballon français conçu en vue d'un projet soviétique d'exploration de Mars est actuellement testé dans le désert de Californie. La mission qui partira en 1994 vers Mars prévoit l'envoi de deux satellites autour de la planète rouge, qui lanceront chacun une capsule parachutée permettant le déploiement de ballons. Ces derniers, cylindres transparents de dix mètres de long, pourraient se déplacer pendant dix jours au-dessus de la planète avec une multitude d'instruments de mesure et de détection. Le désert de Californie a été choisi pour les tester, car ses paysages de sable, de lave et de rochers, se rapprochent le plus de ceux de Mars.

POCHÉ. Le «Data discman» que vient de présenter Sony à la foire du livre de Frankfurt rassemble dans un format de carte postale l'équivalent de 200.000 pages de texte, accessibles en quelques secondes. Il permet de consulter n'importe où, dans la rue, en voiture, au bureau, l'équivalent de cinq volumes de dictionnaire, un guide de médecine ou un Who's Who. Pour cela, il suffit d'introduire dans le lecteur un compact disc de 8 cm de diamètre et de taper sur un minuscule clavier. La réponse apparaît sur un écran de 12 lignes de texte. Commercialisé au Japon depuis le mois de juillet, il le sera en Europe à l'automne 1991, aux alentours de 2.000FF.

DAMES

Problème N. 32.

Les blancs gagnent en cinq coups.



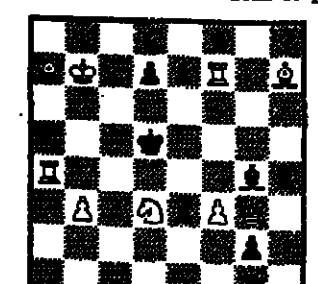
Solution du problème N. 31:

B. 23-20; N. 11-2; B. 3-7; N. 4-18; B. 19-14; N. 12-26; B. 14-32; N. 5-14; B. 32-28; N. 16-23; B. 28-10.

ECHECS

Problème N. 32.

Mit avec les blancs en deux coups.



Solution du problème N. 31:

Cd3-c5.

PASSEZ-MOI MON FRANCAIS

La rubrique de Flavia Romero

Dans les marais

Ave Egeria,

C'est une histoire vraie et infiniment triste que je vais te raconter. Une histoire qui ne cesse pas de me revenir en mémoire. J'ai visité cet été les marais poitevins, qui est un lieu féérique, formé d'un réseau très étendu de canaux bordés d'herbe bleue et d'osier. On y navigue dans les «naujournées» (1) qui glissent silencieuses sur l'eau complètement recouverte d'un épais tapis de lentilles d'eau, d'un vert brillant et clair, sur lequel les poules d'eau grattent à longueur de journée. Leurs pattes aux longs doigts leur permettent de se déplacer sur ces minuscules plantes qui ne cèdent pas sous leur poids. De temps à autre, on entrevoit l'eau, quand l'animal aquatique, grenouille, carpe ou serpent, d'un mouvement rapide et bref, déchire la couche végétale. L'eau, qui sinon est invisible, sent très fort et bon. Les branches entrelacées des arbres forment une voûte ininterrompue filtrant la lumière qui se reflète sur l'émail des lentilles et remplit l'espace d'une couleur à peine teintée, transparente, d'aquarium.

Pourtant, ce lieu de toute beauté a été, à deux reprises, dominé par les forces du mal, qui lui ont fait connaître honte, peur et mort.

Chaque dimanche, comme le veut l'usage, les filles des environs se font belles et vont danser dans les guinguettes du coin. Il fut un temps où des beaux leur proposaient des ballades en barge dans les marais. Celles qui avaient la naïveté d'accepter ne revenaient plus. Elles étaient embarquées vers des pays lointains d'où il leur était impossible de revenir. Deux personnes savaient tout ce trafic immonde mais, auraient-elles parlé, qui les aurait crues? D'ailleurs, elles n'auraient même pas la capacité de s'exprimer avec quelque clarté.

L'une d'elle, Sylvaine, était une sauvageonne au corps musclé, rompu aux intempéries. Elle ne se laissait approcher de personne et quand, rarement, elle était surprise par les garçons qui lui donnaient la chasse, elle se défendait en leur lançant des cailloux et des poignées de boue. Il ne lui était d'ailleurs pas difficile de leur faire perdre sa trace dans cet enchevêtrement de voies d'eau. Elle avait la méfiance d'une bête traquée. Seuls ses yeux grands et verts possédaient une magie qui, au-delà de ses traits quelque peu expressifs et vulgaires, révélait une sensibilité aiguë, tendue vers le sublime. On la voyait toujours manger des gros morceaux de pain tartinés au fromage blanc qu'elle mordait en avalant avec une avidité rapide et naïve, comme si elle sentait que c'était le seul plaisir que la vie lui accorderait jamais. De fromage, elle se barbouillait toute la figure et ceux qui avaient réussi à l'approcher avaient flairé, très aiguë, une odeur sauvage, pareille à celle des hérissons.

L'autre personne était un homme qui vivait seul. Difficile de lui donner un âge. Peut-être n'avait-il même pas de nom. Peu de jours après sa naissance, un mur de la maison s'était écroulé tuant ses parents et le laissant estropié. La nature n'avait pas été généreuse avec lui: il ressemblait à un gros singe, les yeux fuyants et suspicieux, très mobiles, les gestes précis de la bête qui sait marcher au cœur du bois le plus touffu, grimper sur un arbre, traverser un canal à la nage, mais qui, dans le contexte d'une normale activité humaine, devient gauche et maladroit. Son aspect ne lui attirait pas la sympathie; pas question qu'il trouve du travail, ne fût-ce que le plus modeste et le plus vil. Pour survivre, il volait du poisson. Les enfants le poursuivaient à coups de pierres, tout en se tenant à une certaine distance car il leur faisait peur. Il était terriblement seul: le marais était son refuge, là où il trouvait la paix, où il arrivait à oublier sa laideur.

Ces deux êtres maltraités par la vie se sentaient semblables mais ne s'étaient jamais rapprochés l'un de l'autre. Il s'était tout de même créé entre eux un lien affectif très fort qu'ils exprimaient en déposant des petits cadeaux là où l'un savait que l'autre allait passer: un poisson cuit à la braise, un morceau de fromage.

Un jour terrible, on découvre les cadavres d'un couple qui vivait dans une maisonnette à la lisière du marais: ils ont été massacrés à coups de haches, par la main d'un gendre avide mais on ne le sut que bien plus tard. Les habitants du lieu sont plongés dans la consternation. Personne n'avait signalé la présence d'étrangers dans les parages et eux se connaissaient si bien, tous, depuis toujours. D'un mouvement général, unanime, on jette la faute sur l'innocent sans nom qui vit dans le marais. Le pauvre bougre, accusé, à l'impression que le mur de sa toute première jeunesse vient de s'écrouler à nouveau sur lui. Il ne pense même pas à se défendre: il n'en a ni la force ni la capacité. Il se pend.

De loin, cachée dans le sous-bois, Sylvaine veille pendant longtemps le corps du seul ami qu'elle ait jamais eu, puis, doucement, elle s'éloigne. Personne ne l'a plus jamais revue.

Vale, Egeria!

(1) Petite barque à fond plat.

German interior minister injured in attack by gunman; bullet removed

FREIBURG, Germany (R) — German Interior Minister Wolfgang Schäuble, shot twice by a deranged gunman, had a bullet removed from his spine during five hours of surgery Saturday and was listed in "satisfactory" condition.

"We believe he is over the worst," his brother Thomas told reporters at Freiburg's University Hospital.

"The operation went well, we hope my brother will make a full recovery," said Thomas Schäuble, a member of the state government in Baden-Wuerttemberg.

An Interior Ministry statement said Schäuble was hit twice in the attack Friday night. One bullet wounded the right side of his face.

The second entered his chest cavity and lodged in his back. Neurosurgeons removed it from the spine near the spinal cord, the statement said, adding that the minister was in "satisfactory and stable condition."

Schäuble, one of Chancellor Helmut Kohl's closest associates, underwent more than five hours of delicate neurological surgery following the shooting late Friday night in his Black Forest constituency of Oppenau, near

Freiburg in southwestern Germany.

The gunman, who also wounded one of Schäuble's bodyguards, was immediately overpowered and taken into police custody.

The Baden-Wuerttemberg state Interior Ministry said the 48-year-old Christian Democrat, had an initial operation and then underwent the second in the neurosurgery unit.

Schäuble, tipped as a possible future chancellor, had given a talk on German unity to a group of 280 party members at an inn in Oppenau on Friday night.

He was leaving to enthusiastic applause when a man wearing a leather jacket fired at him with a Smith and Wesson revolver.

"Just before the door a man jumped up from a table on the left, jumped past the security men and fired at him," said Hans-Peter Junker, a journalist who witnessed the shooting.

A woman who spoke to the minister as he lay bleeding heavily immediately after the attack said in a tearful radio interview: "I saw Mr. Schäuble lying on the ground, with a shot here in the back and here near the ears. I said to him 'you mustn't die.' He raised his head to me, looked at

me and said he couldn't feel his feet. He had no sensation in his feet."

The gunman also injured a bodyguard who dived in front of the minister to try to shield him. The bodyguard's injuries were not life-threatening.

"We understand the assailant is a 37-year-old man who was already known to the police from the drugs scene and, we hear, had been under treatment for schizophrenia," Interior Ministry spokesman Roland Bachmeier told journalists.

The federal prosecutor's office in Karlsruhe told Reuters there was no evidence of terrorist involvement and Baden-Wuerttemberg's Interior Ministry said: "He was definitely working on his own."

In line with normal German practice, police declined to name the assailant, but television identified him as Dieter K.

While German police have concentrated on combating terrorism from extreme leftist Red Army Faction (RAF) guerrillas, Schäuble is the second leading politician this year to fall victim to a disturbed loner.

Opposition Social Democratic leader Oskar Lafontaine survived a knife attack by a mentally ill

woman who stabbed him in the neck at a political rally in Cologne in April.

The style of both incidents — lunging attacks in full view of an audience — is far removed from the disciplined planning and high-tech stealth of the RAF, which used a sophisticated bomb triggered by an electronic tripwire to murder Deutsche Bank chief Alfred Herrhausen last November.

E. Germans vote in regional elections

People in the East of Germany vote Sunday in elections that will establish federal rule in five new regional states and take the country's pulse less than two weeks after unification.

After decades of Communist-rigged elections and centralist rule, East Germans have had two tastes of democracy this year at March's general election and grassroots local polls in May.

On Sunday, 11.4 million voters in former East Germany elect regional parliaments in five new states — Saxony, Brandenburg, Saxony-Anhalt, Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, and Thuringia — after a slow campaign suggesting voter apathy.

Nobel Peace Prize changes with times

OSLO (AP) — The Nobel Peace Prize, to be awarded Monday for the 71st time, has switched from its early character and geographical boundaries to reflect the dramatic global changes of the century.

The award, once the domain of Western peacemakers and statesmen, increasingly encourages human rights or pro-democracy activists around the world.

"The changing has been very important: To no longer look just to the Western world but to the whole world," said Gidske Anderson, Norwegian Nobel Committee leader.

She said the 1989 award to Tibet's exiled leader, the Dalai Lama, was an important example of change.

The 1990 winner's name, if there is one, remains a closely guarded secret until Ms. Anderson makes the announcement at the Nobel Institute in Oslo.

Since the first award in 1901, the prize has been withheld 19 times, most recently 1972.

Norway's news media are betting on Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev, Czech President Vaclav Havel, South African anti-apartheid champion Nelson Mandela or Chinese pro-democracy activist Chai Ling.

"I always find it a little amusing," Ms. Anderson said of the media speculation, which is often off the mark.

Nominations for 74 individuals and 26 organizations were received before the Feb. 1 deadline.

Ms. Anderson would not say if the 1990 award would be surprising.

"But there is always someone who will criticize the choice. It's perfectly natural. There are a lot of opinions in the world," she said.

Nobel Institute Director Geir Lundestad said the biggest change in the prize has been its geographic distribution.

Before 1960, only the winner — Argentina's Carlos Saavedra Lamas in 1936 — was from outside North America and Western Europe. But six of the past 10 winners were from other parts of the world.

Lundestad said the institute is seeking consultants "in regions where we are weak: Asia, South America and Africa."

The prize was founded by Alfred Nobel, a Swede who hoped the terrible power of his invention — dynamite — would force the world to disarm. It is always awarded in Oslo on the Dec. 10 anniversary of his death in 1896.

No one knows why Nobel picked Norway for the peace prize. The awards for science and literature are made in Sweden.

Nobel's will said the peace prize should recognize those who had arranged peace conferences, negotiated disarmament or "encouraged brotherhood between nations."

Vietnam war hero, Le Duc Tho, dies

BANGKOK (AP) — Le Duc Tho, the Vietnamese Communist revolutionary who won but refused to accept a Nobel Peace Prize for negotiating a ceasefire to the Vietnam war, died in Hanoi early Saturday.

The Foreign Ministry in the Vietnamese capital confirmed Tho's death but gave no further details. Official accounts say he was 79.

Tho shared the Nobel Prize with then-U.S. Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger, with whom he had negotiated the Paris peace accords of 1973. But Tho turned down the honour, saying peace had not yet come to South Vietnam.

The guns fell silent two years later, when Communist forces finally defeated the U.S.-backed Saigon government and unified the country. Tho, however, said nothing about the prize and sank into a behind-the-scenes role.

The tough hardliner, one of the organizers and theoreticians of Communist revolution in Vietnam, remained in the all-powerful politburo after 1975 and was believed to have had a key role in Vietnam's invasion of Cambodia in late 1978.

But in 1986, at the party's sixth congress, he was removed from the politburo as aging veterans were replaced by more liberal leaders seeking economic reform.

Western diplomats have speculated that in recent years Tho's power had ebbed but that he remained an important figure in the conservative ranks of the party. His official position was as an advisor to the party's Central Committee.

S. Korean police clash with angry protesters

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — Riot police fired tear gas Saturday to block a street march by thousands of angry protesters leaving a rally of more than 100,000 dissidents and opponents of the government.

About 20,000 people waving banners and shouting "down with (President) Roh Tae-Woo" were blocked from marching toward downtown Seoul by riot police about 4 kilometres from the park where the protest was held.

Police fired volleys of tear gas to disperse radicals and dissidents hurling firebombs and chunks of cement pavement torn from the sidewalks.

"Disband Defence Security Command," protesters shouted as thousands of other marchers clicked flashlights and cigarette lighters on and off in the dark in a show of protest and unity.

Protesters are demanding the dissolution of the Security Command military intelligence unit, which has conducted illegal and widespread spying on more than 1,300 civilians.

Violence also erupted inside the park as the rally ended with some protesters hurled rocks and bottles toward the podium.

Another group of protesters attacked a truck carrying about 20 members of the splinter Democratic Party.

The reason for the violence was unclear, but it appeared to be disagreements between two fac-

Le Duc Tho

Last month, Vietnam awarded Tho the Gold Star Order — a significant honour — for his more than 60 years of political activity. He was praised for his "undaunted, staunch and indomitable revolutionary spirit."

Until the end, Tho kept parts of his life from the public domain, as did many revolutionary leaders of his generation. There are even several different versions of his birthdate.

By some accounts he was born of poor parents in a village about 96 kilometres south of Hanoi. But other Western biographical sources say his father was a civil service official of middle rank in the French colonial administration.

Still in his teens, Tho became involved in left-wing labour and political movements and helped organise several strikes and riots in the Hanoi area.

COLUMN

Men take to the track for a good cause

ST. JOHN, New Brunswick (R) — There will be no shame in being short and fat in Canada's Atlantic provinces. That is the day of the fourth annual short fat guys downhill run in 13 cities across the region. Participants will be bussed to starting points at the tops of hills, then buff and puff down mile-long (1.6-kilometre) courses, which will have hot-dog stands halfway down in case anyone gets hungry. "People run in costumes and some are dragged down in bath-tubs," said organiser Gordie Myles, who stands five feet, 10 inches tall (1.78 metres), weighs 217 pounds (98.4 kilograms) and boasts "it's all in my stomach." Myles said he dreamed up the "marathon" because he was tired of fund raisers designed for athletes. "I told my friend — who's 5-foot-6 and 270 pounds (1.68 metres and 122.47 kg) — that we should have a run for guys like us, short and fat." Organisers hope to raise more than 150,000 dollars (\$128,200) for the Children's Wish Foundation, an organisation that grants wishes to terminally ill children. There is no rule stating that participants must be short and fat, but Myles said more than half of the 2,000 people taking part will probably be overweight.

Diana caught speeding

LONDON (R) — Police caught Britain's Princess Diana driving at nearly twice the speed limit near her central London home, and gave her a warning but no ticket. Police said Thursday Princess Diana, wife of heir to the throne Prince Charles, was followed along a road near Kensington Palace Monday by a motorcycle policeman who clocked her Jaguar XJS travelling at 55 miles per hour (88 kph) in a 30 miles per hour (48 kph) zone. "The (policeman) followed the car, which entered Kensington Palace, and had reason to give a verbal warning. No further action is anticipated," a police spokesman said. Prince Charles's sister Princess Anne was last month charged with speeding twice in one week near her home in Gloucestershire, southwestern England.

Monk called to ward off evil spirits

BANGKOK (R) — Thai Prime Minister Chatchai Choonhavan has called in one of his wife's favourite Buddhist monks to ward off evil spirits from his office. Acharn Uttama sprinkled holy water at government house and the cabinet's meeting room in a special ceremony, the Nation newspaper reported Friday. The prime minister, under pressure in recent weeks from the army and squabbling cabinet ministers, has denied rumours of a cabinet reshuffle before he leaves for Europe next week.

World's oldest bird reconstructed from fossil

CHICAGO (R) — The world's oldest bird, a tiny sparrow-like creature that appears to be an evolutionary link to dinosaurs, has been reconstructed from a Chinese fossil 135 million years old, U.S. scientists said Thursday. University of Chicago researchers said they were able to resurrect the creature's likeness from a fossil found in a farm field in China's Liaoning province in 1987. "If you saw this bird perched in a tree it would probably appear modern, with flying and perching abilities virtually identical to today's birds," said paleontologist Paul Sereno. But Sereno said the as yet unnamed creature — with a pelvis like a dinosaur and clawed talons along its wings — represents a clear intermediary step between the dinosaur and birds of today. The bird is 10 million years older than any other known modern bird. But it lived 10 million years later than the Archaeopteryx, the oldest known precursor of today's bird. The fossil of the bird is owned by the Peking Natural History Museum. Sereno, whose work was supported by the U.S. National Geographic Society, last year unveiled a reconstruction of the oldest known dinosaur, the 230-million-year-old Herrerasaurus.

Ariane puts 2 satellites into orbit after blast off

PARIS (R) — Europe's Ariane space rocket blasted off with two U.S. satellites aboard from a launch pad in Kourou, French Guiana Friday evening.

The 58-metre (190-foot) tall Ariane-4 rocket streaked into the night sky off the coast of South America at 7.58 p.m. (2258 GMT), one minute after the scheduled takeoff time.

It was carrying two U.S.-built Hughes Corporation Telecommunications satellites.

The rocket, the largest of the Ariane family of unmanned space launchers, ejected the first satellite, the SBS 6, into space after 20 minutes.

Five minutes later, the Galaxy VI satellite, to be used for media transmissions, also slipped into

geostationary orbit 36,000 kilometres above the Earth.

After manoeuvres to avoid colliding with the satellites, the Ariane rocket's 39th mission came to an end successfully.

Ariane has captured more than half the world's commercial satellite market, ahead of U.S., Soviet and Chinese launchers.

Friday's launch was the third successful flight since the European programme suffered a setback when a rocket exploded in February.

The Soviet Union's efforts to grab a slice of the lucrative commercial space market were dealt a blow earlier this week when a rocket exploded on its launch pad at Baikonur.

3 killed as Bangladesh police fire on protesters

DHAKA (R) — Police fired on rioting Bangladeshi students Saturday, killing three and wounding at least 30 people in a wave of anti-government protests, witnesses said.

They said students set at least six vehicles on fire and damaged scores of government and commercial buildings in Dhaka and the country's southern port city of Chittagong as a student protest strike turned into rioting.

Protesters said police fired teargas at students trying to stage processions in both cities with the bodies of the victims.

Police said they opened fire when some protesters threw rocks near Tejgaon industrial area. Two students of a nearby polytechnic institute died of bul-

let wounds and 15 policemen were injured.

"They (protesters) were in a ferocious mood. A good number of us would have been dead if we hadn't used our guns," an officer, who asked not be identified, told Reuters.

Hospital sources said they treated at least 30 people with bullet injuries. Ten were students.

In Chittagong, police also fired on a crowd which attacked them in Sholashahar industrial area. One man, from a local polytechnic institute, died of bullet wounds and 20 were admitted to hospital with injuries.

The students called the strike in schools and colleges to protest at the police beating of student leaders in Dhaka University.

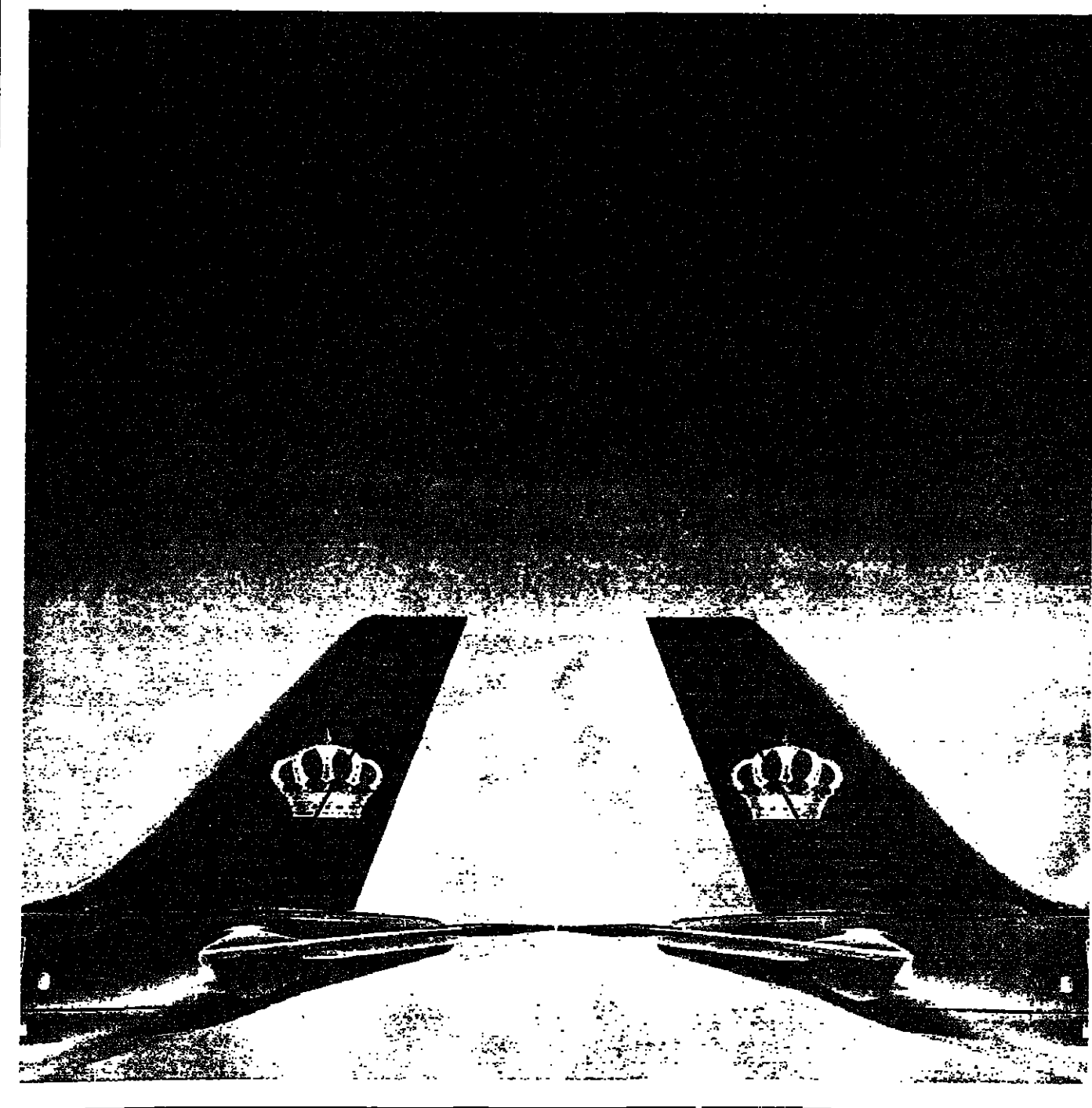
DISCOVER THE WORLD FROM THE GATEWAY OF ROYAL JORDANIAN

Amman, a modern city 3,000 years old, has been the crossroads of civilizations for centuries. Today, it is still the gateway to both the western and eastern worlds.

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Hungary says E. Europe caught in vicious circle

THE HAGUE (R) — Hungarian Prime Minister Jozsef Antall said Friday East European nations would be doomed to poverty and instability unless they could attract foreign investment.

Antall told reporters that East European countries were caught in a vicious circle. "The world expects stability in order to invest, but at the same time without investment the region will not be stable," he said.

"It is in the interest of all of Europe that these (Eastern) countries become stable and re-construct their economies. Otherwise social conflict will cause real problems and the process of poverty will continue," he pointed out.

Antall visited the Netherlands and Britain seeking to extend economic ties between Hungary and the European Community.

Hungary, relatively well off compared to other East European countries, will have a current account deficit of \$1.5 to \$2 billion next year and its inflation rate is nearing 50 per cent, according to the Hungarian Economic Research Institute.

Meanwhile, Jacques Attali, head of the newly founded European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (BERD), will in 10 days time present major shareholders with his vision of how the organisation will help rebuild Eastern Europe.

Attali, who will step down as French President Francois Mitterrand's personal adviser to take full charge of the bank, will present a four-part strategy outlining his objectives at a meeting from Oct. 22 to 24, bankers said Friday.

The London-based bank, widely seen as Attali's brainchild, was set up to channel funds into the new democracies of Eastern Europe and aid the creation of Western-style market economies.

Bankers said the four points would cover:

- BERD's business strategy, which Attali sees as a cross between the World Bank and the U.S. investment bank J.P. Morgan.
- Its financial objectives from the start of operations to the end of 1992. Attali intends it to be profit-making. BERD will start with capital of 10 billion European Currency Units and will not be able to rely on annual members' subscriptions.
- Pay and terms of employment.
- Regulations setting out the relationship between management and the board plus internal command structures.

Bankers said the October meeting may continue the vigorous debate over Attali's management style and his plans to introduce a merchant banking philosophy.

Judge orders Kodak to pay Polaroid \$0.9b

BOSTON (R) — U.S. photography giant Eastman Kodak was ordered Friday to pay almost \$1 billion to Polaroid for infringing on its instant photo patents to make a rival camera.

The amount was a quarter of what Polaroid had been seeking since it won the case against Kodak five years ago and much less than what market experts expected it would be.

But at \$909.5 million it was believed to be the second largest damages judgment in U.S. corporate history, dwarfed only by the \$10.3 billion award to Pennzoil Co. against Texaco Inc. in a dispute over the takeover of another oil company.

Analysts said the decision will likely give shares in Kodak a strong boost when trading resumes Monday. But they were divided on what affect the award would have on Polaroid shares.

In a nearly 200-page decision, U.S. district judge David M. Bazelon ruled that Kodak infringed on its instant photography patents in developing its own instant camera in the 1970s.

The total award also reflects interest and royalties.

A different judge ruled in 1985 that Kodak violated Polaroid's patents, forcing Kodak out of the instant photography business.

But the matter of damages was left to be decided later.

"Based on our understanding of the facts and applicable law, we can say the award is substantially more than the amount to which we believe Polaroid is entitled," said Kay Whitmore, Kodak president and chief executive.

The Rochester, N.Y.-based Kodak said the award will have no material effect on the company and will be paid from earnings.

Kodak entered the instant photography business in April 1976 and sold about 16 million instant cameras before it was forced out by the federal court order.

Polaroid's patents expire this year and Kodak has said it has no plans to reenter the instant photography business.

Polaroid alleged that it had suffered losses of nearly \$4 billion as a result of Kodak's patent infringement. It said it lost sales to Kodak which offered its camera at a cheaper price.

Kodak counter-claimed that Polaroid had lost less than \$350 million as a result of its camera.

Polaroid's instant camera, which develops photos on the spot in 60 seconds, was a technological marvel that captivated buyers when it first appeared on store shelves in 1948.

Gorbachev orders protection of property rights

MOSCOW (R) — Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev, in a move apparently aimed at protecting the vast holdings of the Communist Party, ordered police and prosecutors Friday to take steps against mass confiscation of property.

Gorbachev issued a decree declaring anti-constitutional the "illegal confiscation of material and monetary values and other property belonging to individuals, labour collectives and other proprietors."

It said illegal confiscations and "encroachments on the property of individuals" had been increasing recently.

The measure was clearly aimed at authorities in the Baltic republics and the Ukraine who have adopted, or are considering, measures giving Communist Party property to local institutions.

The decree, using language rarely found in the communist lexicon, said the inviolability of property "maintains the stability of the economic, social and political situation in the country during this difficult stage in its development."

It ordered the national government and prosecutors to take steps to ensure protection of property. The interior ministry was told to "take under protection, if need be, the items of state and collective property in case they are threatened with illegal confiscation."

Following Lithuania's declaration of independence in March, security forces occupied several party buildings in the republic after authorities transferred them to other institutions.

Authorities in Estonia, which has also declared its intention to leave the Soviet Union, have been discussing the nationalisation of party property.

And at least one Ukrainian local authority has engineered such a transfer, the latest sign of the party's loss of prestige after the introduction of multi-party politics this year.

Oil shock sends U.S. wholesale prices soaring

WASHINGTON (R) — The shock of higher oil prices rippled through the U.S. economy in September, sending wholesale inflation soaring, the government reported Friday.

It brought a weak economy to the brink of recession.

Analysts warned that huge energy price rises since Iraq's takeover of Kuwait were only starting to be felt, which left federal policymakers effectively hamstrung because stimulative lower interest rates might aggravate a dangerous round of future increases.

A record 20.6 per cent climb in petrol prices last month helped propel the producer price index up 1.6 per cent, the steepest monthly rise since January following a 1.3 per cent jump in August, the Labour Department said.

The same surge in prices at the petrol pump contributed to a 1.1 per cent increase in retail sales in September after a 0.4 per cent fall in August, a separate monthly report from the Commerce Department said.

Car sales also rose as dealers offered incentives to clear out left-over 1990 models.

Though sales were artificially boosted by more expensive petrol, the pickup in overall business showed consumers were not yet completely cowed by rising prices, analysts said.

"Taken together, these two indicators of course put another roadblock in the way of Fed easing," said Robert Dederick, chief economist for Northern Trust Co. in Chicago.

The Federal Reserve Board, or Fed, is the U.S. central bank that controls credit partly through its ability to raise or lower interest rates. Bringing rates down normally boosts economic activity. But the Fed's public commitment to restraining inflation makes it hard for it to make credit easier while consumers continue to spend.

The Bush administration, which has in the past urged the Fed to bring rates down, offered a relatively rare endorsement of the central bank's steady course.

"We think the Fed... is on the right course," White House spokesman Martin Fitzwater said, adding the producer price rises last month were a cause for concern.

If wholesale inflation continued at the September pace, it would result in an annual rate of 20.9 per cent, the Labour Department said. Economist Allen Sinai of Boston Co. and Economic Advisers Inc. said such a steep rise was "horrendous" and it was only starting.

"The flow-through process for oil prices rises is three to nine months, which means inflation is going to remain quite high for a long time," Sinai said. Inflation is likely to climb above 10 per cent by the final three months of this year, he added.

In all likelihood, the U.S. economy entered recession during August, even if sales rose and even if initial estimates of total goods-and-services production for the third quarter published later this month do not show it, Sinai said.

"It looks like, feels like, walks like a recession," Sinai said.

There has not been a recession, defined as back-to-back quarters of shrinking goods and services output, since 1981-82, but most economists foresee at least a mild one beginning by the end of the year.

Traders control nerves

Oil prices stay near \$40 a barrel

LONDON (R) — Nervousness before Iraqi President Saddam Hussein's broadcast to the world's children, and another weekend wondering if a Gulf war will start, held crude oil close to \$40 a barrel in late European trading Friday.

"We're a little jittery waiting for Saddam's speech. It may be to mark Iraq's children's day, but I think he'll find a slightly odd audience," an oil trader with a large U.S. commission house in London said before the scheduled broadcast.

In his speech, which held little new, Saddam said he held West-

ern leaders responsible for the death of any Iraqi child from lack of food or medicine because of the U.N. embargo.

Traders took this to mean Iraq had no intention of quitting Kuwait.

In late European trading prices were down almost \$1 from some crudes, after recovering from falls in the Far East.

These declines stemmed from a combination of a report from the British Broadcasting Corporation that tensions in the Gulf were easing, and a U.S. television report quoting senior Pentagon officials as saying the U.S. was not planning a strike against Iraq forces this month or next.

The broadcast from Baghdad overshadowed statements from French, British and Italian leaders which gave varying views of how close the Western allies were to going to war.

The market was earlier unsettled by the shooting in Cairo of Egypt's parliamentary speaker by two gunmen. This latest sign of unrest in the Middle East put a few cents on prices.

Traders, by now used to living on their nerves, described Friday's market as fairly mundane compared with twists seen earlier in a week when prices swung in a \$4 range.

The market was still open to Gulf-related rumours, but their effects on prices were muted.

On the spot market North Sea Brent blend, regarded as a market for internationally traded crudes, was quoted around \$40.10 a barrel, down \$1.05 from Thursday's close in the U.S. Barrels for November loading were quoted at \$39.55, down 95 cents.

The futures market had Brent at \$39.55 for the November contract of London's International Petroleum Exchange, down 18 cents on Thursday's settlement price.

Arab states to write off Cairo's debts, paper says

ABU DHABI (R) — Arab states have agreed to write off Egyptian debts of between \$7 and \$9 billion, the semi-official newspaper Al Itihad reported Friday.

It quoted Egypt's minister of cabinet affairs and administrative development, Atef Obeid, as saying the agreement was reached last month.

"We have agreed with Arab finance ministers attending the International Monetary Fund meeting in Washington for the cancellation of Egypt's debts due to its difficult situation caused by the Gulf crisis," he quoted Obeid as saying.

He did not list Egypt's creditors, but most of the loans were from Gulf Arab states.

Obeid said Cairo was preparing a list of debts and an Egyptian delegation would visit the Gulf states in the next few weeks to discuss details.

"Cancellation of such debts will give a big push to Egypt's economy and to our negotiations with the Paris Club next month to reschedule part of our debt," Obeid said.

He said Egypt was seeking to reschedule between \$10 and \$12 billion in debts with the West and to get new loans for development projects.

Prague devalues crown

PRAGUE (R) — Czechoslovakia devalued the crown by more than a third against leading Western currencies Friday.

New rates of exchange issued by the state bank showed devaluations of between 35 and 38 per cent of the crown's commercial rate.

The rates came into effect Monday, the bank said.

The rate for the dollar changes to 24 crowns from 15.53, a devaluation of 35.3 per cent, according to International Monetary Fund methods of calculation.

Deutsche mark will be worth 15.72 crowns instead of 10.09, a change of 35.8 per cent. British sterling will be worth 37.3 per cent more, 47.22 crowns against 29.60, and the Japanese yen goes up by 37.64 per cent, to 18.49 from 13.53.

The crown's commercial rate was devalued against other hard currencies by similar amounts.

The commercial rate is the official level at which foreign trade is conducted. It is lower than the tourist rates at which foreigners can buy crowns and Czechoslovaks can buy hard currency.

Meanwhile, Czechoslovakia is to buy 500,000 tonnes of oil from the Tyumen region of the Russian Federation for cuts in official Soviet supplies, the state news agency CTK reported.

Czechoslovakia will pay for the oil by delivering vehicles, earth-moving equipment and consumer goods to Tyumen, according to an agreement signed in Prague.

Alitalia doubles Airbus A321 order to 40 planes

TOULOUSE, France (R) — Italy's national airline Alitalia Friday doubled to 40 its order for the Airbus A321, the latest version of the West European passenger jet. Alitalia signed a contract to buy 40 of the fly-by-wire planes and took out options to buy a further 20 in a deal worth 5.8 trillion lire (\$5.1 billion). Its decision to choose the Airbus A321 over its U.S. rival, the Boeing 737, brought to 131 the number of firm orders for this twin-jet airliner built by a consortium of European aerospace companies based in Toulouse in southern France. The Airbus A321 is a stretched version of the present A320 model. It will carry 180 passengers on short to medium haul routes and is due to enter service in 1994.

Worldways Canada suspends operations

TORONTO (R) — Canada's largest charter airline, Worldways Canada Ltd., has suspended operations citing dramatic increases in the cost of jet fuel.

The airline, which had been suffering from financial problems for several months, shut down late Thursday after fuel suppliers insisted on cash payments.

Worldways said in a statement that it was "temporarily suspending all flight operations" from the close of business Thursday.

"This decision was arrived at following very intensive negotiations over the last several weeks in an effort to alleviate the cash-flow crisis currently facing the airline due to the dramatic increase in jet fuel prices. Worldways fully expects to resume operations within the next few weeks," the airline said.

Worldways officials declined to elaborate on the statement, but local newspapers reported that about 1,000 employees would be laid off.

British inflation nears 11%

LONDON (AP) — Higher oil prices propelled Britain's annual inflation rate up to 10.9 per cent in September, its highest level in more than 8½ years.

Although inflation is peaking, the worse-than-expected figures for September suggest that the decline will not be as fast as had been hoped, economists said.

"A bit of a shock," is the way Ian Harwood, an economist at the London investment firm Warburg Securities, described the news.

Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher said Friday inflation "will soon begin to decline."

Linking the pound to Europe's currency system this past Monday "will reinforce our own financial discipline against it," she said.

Britain has the worst inflation rate among the major industrialised nations despite Thatcher's efforts. She has said fighting inflation is her no. 1 economic priority.

Thatcher, speaking at the conservative Party's annual conference, said that "signs are clear" that the government's high interest rate policy is working. This allowed the government to announce a cut in base rates by one percentage point to 14 per cent this past Monday, she said.

Chancellor of the Exchequer John Major told reporters the inflation rise was "where we thought it would be."

In his speech to the conference Thursday, Major warned that recent increases in oil prices had yet to feed through into the inflation figures. But he said he expects the inflation rate to fall sharply next year.

The 10.9 per cent rate was the highest level since inflation stood at 11 per cent in February 1982 and compared with a rate of 10.6 per cent in August, the government said.

The underlying level of annual inflation, which excludes mortgage payments and a per-capita tax, rose to 8.3 per cent in September from 7.9 per cent in August.

Retail prices rose 0.9 per cent in September from the previous month.

The government blamed a sharp increase in gasoline prices to an average of £2.31 (\$4.55) a gallon from £2.13 (\$4.20) in August.

There also were price increases in a wide range of other goods and services, it said.

"September will be the peak," Harwood said. "The bad news however, is that the unexpected robustness (in the underlying rate) means the fall in the rate will be less than expected."

Gwyn Hache, an economist with James Capel and Co., said what was worrisome was that non-oil prices rose more than expected.

Although Harwood expects inflation to fall below 10 per cent by the end of the year, he said forecasts that it will fall to five per cent or lower in 1991 are proving optimistic.

AMMAN EXCHANGE RATES				
Saturday, October 13, 1990				
Central Bank official rates				
	Buy	Sell		
U.S. dollar	651.0	655.0		
Pound Sterling	1260.9	1268.6		
Deutsche mark	427.1	429.7		
Swiss franc	506.3	509.3		
French franc	127.5	128.3		
Japanese yen (for 100)	504.3	507.3		
Dutch guilder	379.1	381.4		
Swedish crown	115.4	116.1		
Italian lira (for 100)	57.1	57.4		
Belgian franc (for 10)	207.4	208.6		

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